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OF THE

Nature and Qualification

OF

RELIGION,

In Reference to

Civil Society.

WRITTEN BY

Samuel Puffendorff,

Counsellor of State to the Late King of *Sweden.*

Translated from the Original.

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CONFESSION

OF

FAITH,

MADE BY

Scots Worthies

IN REFERENCE TO

RELIGION,

OR

THE NATIONAL COVENANT

OF

SCOTLAND,

AND

SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT

OF

THE THREE KINGDOMS.

THE

Introductory Epistle,

Presented to the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM,

Lord Craven,

Baron Craven

OF

HAMSTEAD MARSH.

My LORD,

THE extraordinary Character you have acquir'd by the joint Consent of those that have the Honour of your Acquaintance, Encourages me to deviate from the common Road, used by our Modern Authors; being made sufficiently sensible, how much a

Mind endow'd with Genorous and Modest Inclinations (the inseparable Companions of a Great Soul) disdains the fullsome Praises, which those Gentlemen make the Chief Subject of their Dedications, whenever they pretend to Court the Patronage of Persons of Quality, in behalf of their Treatises. I must confess, I should scarce have had so much Presumption thus to intrude my self into your Lordship's Favour, if I had not been sufficiently persuaded, that the Renown our Author has so deservedly gain'd both here and abroad (and that under the Protection of some of the greatest Princes in Europe*) would be prevailing enough with your Lordship, to pardon an Undertaking, which, if in it self justifiable in nothing else, might perhaps claim the benefit of a general Custom from your Goodness. The Reputation of our* Author *being so universally and unquestionably established*

stablished among all such as have a true relish of Learning. I might without the least Prejudice to him; supercede to enlarge here upon this Treatise, if it were not rather out of a desire to satisfie the Curiosity of some, who believe to have sufficient Reason for certain Objections made against some Assertions contained in this Treatise, than with an Intention to make the least Addition to a Piece, which, whether in regard of the nicety of the Subject it Treats of, or of the Concatination and force of its Arguments, deserves to be reckoned among the best now extant in Europe. *Those, who center the utmost Felicity of* Civil Society *in a Democratical form of Government, have not been wanting to charge our* Author *with too much Passion for that Doctrine,* of Passive Obedience, *which leaves Subjects to the absolute Disposal of their Princes; But, besides that, the* Appendix *annexed to*

this Treatise, *written by our* Author, *in opposition to* Mr. Hobbes's *Monstrous Principles concerning this* unlimited Power, *may sufficiently clear him from this Imputation; If these Gentlemen would have taken the pains to make a due comparison of the several Passages both in this, and other Treatises of our* Author, *relating to this Subject, they might, without much difficulty, have been convinc'd of their Error; As far as I am capable of penetrating into the Matter, it is the word* Princeps, *or Prince, which sticks most closely in their Stomachs, not considering, That the Words,* Summi Imperantes, *or* Sovereigns; *and that of* Princeps, *or* Prince, *are Synoms to our* Author; *and that out of a great many Passages in this* Treatise, *it is sufficiently apparent, that he attributes the Sovereign Power not always to one single Person, but sometimes*

times alſo to a Council inveſted with the Supream Adminiſtration of the Sovereign Authority in the Commonwealth. If it were but only for that Advice given by our Author *at the very beginning of his* Appendix *to young Lawyers*, to wit, *to take care*, that under the Pretence of maintaining the Prerogatives of Princes, they ſhould not be prodigal of their Liberty and Property, *and his aſſerting the Foundation of* Civil Societies *to be built upon the* Common Conſent *of mutual Defence againſt Violences; This alone, I ſay, might be a convincing Argument to any unbyaſs'd Perſon, that his Aim was very remote from maintaining an Arbitrary Power in the State. The next thing laid to our* Author's *Charge is, that he ſo entirely ſeparates the Chriſtian Religion from the* State, *as not to have the leaſt Interference with one another; whereas the contrary is now*

a-days practised in most Christian States, and in the Commonwealth of the Jews *(instituted by God's peculiar Direction) this Union was inseparable. It cannot be denied, but that the outward Form of Church Government, especially among the* Protestants, *is in a great measure, and in most places adapted to that of the* State; *it being evident, that most of the* Monarchical States, Episcopacy, *as most suitable with that Constitution, was never abolished; as on the contrary, the same was quite extirpated in the* Protestant Commonwealths. *This is most particularly observable among the* Lutherans, *who, tho' all agreeing in Point of Doctrine, are nevertheless, so far different from one another in the Ceremonial Point, and outward Form of Church Government, that in outward Appearance, they seem'd to be so many several Churches. Thus in the two Northern*

King-

Kingdoms of Sweden *and* Denmark, *the Epiſcopal Authority (tho' much diminiſhed in its Revenues) is retained to this day; whereas in ſome* Commonwealths *in* Germany, *where the ſame* Religion *is Eſtabliſhed, it is quite aboliſhed, and not the leaſt footſteps of* Subordination *of* Prieſts *to be met with. But this* Objection *is eaſily cleared, if we take into due* Conſideration, *that it being the* Intention *of our* Author *to repreſent in thoſe places* Religion *in its genuine and native* Conſtitution, *freed from all what is foreign to its true* Genius, *he did not think it convenient, to clog it with any thing that was not an* Eſſential *part of it; eſpecially when his chief aim was to ſhew the real difference betwixt the* Chriſtian *and* Jewiſh Religion. *There are alſo not a few, who prompted by a prepoſterous* Zeal, *have imputed to our* Author *a certain kind of* Libertiniſm *in* Religion, *for which, I can ſee no other* Reaſon, *than that they are diſſatisfied with his* Aſſertions *againſt any thing that has the leaſt reſemblance of* Perſecution *upon the ſcore of* Difference *of* Opinions. *I am well ſatisfied, that the* Reaſons *alledged by him, are ſo ſolid in themſelves, and ſo exactly applied to this Purpoſe, that they cannot but be* Convincing

to

to all such, as are not prepossessed either with By-Interest, or a most stupid Ignorance, For, if the Slavery of the Body be absolutely repugnant to the Inclinations of a generous Soul, How much more insupportable must the Slavery of the Mind be to a sublime Genius, elevated above the common Sphere of bigotted Zealots Ignorance, being the Mother of perverted Zeal, and consequently of a persecuting Spirit, the same ought to be look'd upon as the common Enemy of all such as are guided by the Light of true Reason? I cannot but take notice here, that our English *Modern Clergy has of late gain'd so peculiar a Character of following so closely these footsteps of convincing Such as differ from them in* Opinion, *rather by strength of Argument, than any forcible Means, that I do not know whether they are not preferrable in this Point, before any other in* Europe. *If any one questions the Truth of it, I appeal to Mr.* Toland's *Case, concerning his Treatise, Entituled,* Christianity not Mysterious. *It is both beyond my scope, and the compass of a Letter, to enter upon the Merits of the Cause on both Sides, it will be sufficient here to refer my self to what has been Published against him lately here in* England,

gland, *and in other Places; All which, if duely compared, will ſoon evince, how much the* Engliſh *Clergy has out-done the reſt, both by force of Argument, and a generous, gentle Behaviour. But I am afraid I have abuſed your Lordſhip's Patience; I will therefore conclude with recommending both my* Author *and* my Self, *to your Lordſhip's Protection, begging Leave to ſubſcribe my ſelf,*

My Lord,

Your Devoted Servant.

J. Crull. M. D.

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THE

OF THE

Nature and Qualification

OF

RELIGION,

In REFERENCE to

CIVIL SOCIETY, &c.

AMong all those Questions, which have for many Ages past been Controverted among Christians, this may be deem'd one of the Chiefest, which Treats of the Nature, Authority, and Power of the Church; and which of the several Christian Sects ought most justly to claim the Title of the *True Church*. The *Romanists* keep this for their last Reserve, when Engag'd with the *Protestants*, That they Attribute the Name of the *True Church*, only to themselves, and boldly stigmatize all such as are not of their Communion, with the Names of rebellious Deserters. This is the main Bulwark they rely upon, thinking it sufficient to Alledge in their own behalf; That they are not obliged so strictly to Examin, and maintain every Article of their

Faith againſt the *Proteſtants*; ſince, whatever Objections may be made out of the Holy Scripture, the ſame ought to be rejected as Erroneous, if not agreeable with the Interpretations and Traditions of their Church; Thus making themſelves both Judges and Witneſſes in their own Cauſe. Beſides this, it is to be look'd upon as a Matter of the greateſt Conſequence, both in regard of the Chriſtian Church, and the Publick Safety in a State, to know exactly, what bounds ought to be preſcribed to the Prieſtly Order in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs; as likewiſe to determin, how far the Power of Sovereigns extends it ſelf in Eccleſiaſtical Matters: For, if either of them tranſgreſs their Bounds, it muſt of neceſſity prove the Cauſe of great Abuſes, Diſturbances and Oppreſſions, both in Church and State. I was the ſooner prevail'd upon to Search into the very bottom of this Queſtion, at this juncture of Time, when not only the *Romiſh Prieſts* apply all their Cunning for the rooting out of the *Proteſtants*, but alſo ſome of the greateſt Princes in Chriſtendom (ſetting aſide the Antient way of Converting People by Reaſon and force of Arguments) have now recourſe to open Violence; and by Dragooning, force their miſerable Subjects to a Religion, which always appear'd abominable to them. But if we propoſe to our ſelves to examin this Point, according ro its own ſolid Principles (as we ought to do) without having recourſe to Ambiguous Terms and Tergiverſations, it is abſolutely requiſite, that we trace the very Original of Religion in General; and of the Chriſtian

Chriſtian Religion in Particular, ſo as to Examin both their Natural Qualifications in reference to Civil Society. For, if this, which is to be look'd upon as the Foundation Stone, be well Secured: And we afterwards do look into the Scriptures, to inveſtigate, in what manner Chriſt himſelf has repreſented his Doctrine to us; it will be no difficult Task to judge, whether, according to the Inſtitution of our Saviour, there ought to be an Eccleſiaſtical Sovereignty exerciſed by *Prieſts*? Or, whether Princes have a Right to make uſe of an Abſolute Power? Or can Compel their Subjects to Obedience by Force of Arms, in Matters of Religion?

Concerning Religion before Civil Societies were Inſtituted.

§. 1. That there is a Supream Being, the Author and Creator both of the Univerſe, and eſpecially of Mankind, which ought to be acknowledged and worſhipped as ſuch by Mankind, as they are Rational Creatures, has been generally receiv'd, not only among Chriſtians, but alſo by moſt of the Pagan Philoſophers, that to pretend to demonſtrate it here, would be Superfluous, and perhaps might be taken as done in prejudice of the judicious Reader; ſince, ſcarce any body, that is not beyond his right Wits, can be ſuppoſed, now a days, to make the leaſt Doubt of the Verity of this Aſſertion. The true Knowledge of Divine Worſhip ariſes from two ſeveral Springs: For, we either by true Ratiocination, deduced out of the Light of Nature, may be Convinced of thoſe Sentiments we ought to have of God, and what Reverence is due to him from us Mortals: Or elſe, ſome Matters, being be-

yond our Apprehenſion, by the bare Light of Nature, are by God's ſpecial Command Revealed to Mankind. Both Kinds are to be the Subject of the following Treatiſe; with this Reſtriction nevertheleſs, nót to inſiſt upon each particular Head of either of them, any further, than they have relation to Civil Society.

Every Man is accountable for his Religion.

§. 2. The firſt Thing which is to be conſidered, both in Natural and Revealed Religion, is, That every body is obliged to worſhip God in his own Perſon, Religious Duty being not to be performed by a Deputy, but by himſelf, in Perſon, who expects to reap the Benefit of religious Worſhip, promiſed by God Almighty. For Man, being a rational Creature, owing its Off-ſpring to God alone, is thereby put under ſuch an indiſpenſible Obligation, that the Coſideration of worſhipping him, to the utmoſt of his Power, can never be entirely exſtinguiſhed in a rational Soul. And here lies the main difference betwixt that Care, which, we ought to have our Souls, and that of our Bodies; the latter of which, may be committed to the Management of others, who being to be Accountable for all Injuries, which may befall us under their Tuition, we are thereby freed from any Guilt againſt our ſelves. So do we commit our ſelves, when we paſs the Seas, to the Management of the Maſter of a Ship, by whoſe ſole Care, without our own Aſſiſtance, we are conducted to the deſired Port. But, no body can ſo entirely transfer the Care of his Soul, and the Exerciſe of Religious Worſhip from himſelf to another

another Man, as to make him alone Accountable for all Miſcarriages, and to free himſelf from Puniſhment. *Every one of us ſhall give Account of himſelf to God.* And it is in vain for St. *Paul* to wiſh, *to be Accurſed from Chriſt, for his Brethren, his Kinſmen, according to the Fleſh.* And, though it is undeniable, That thoſe who have been negligent in taking care of other Peoples Souls, that were committed to their Charge, ſhall receive Puniſhment; Nevertheleſs, theſe, whoſe Souls have been thus neglected, ſhall periſh with them, for having put too much Truſt in others, and neglected their own Salvation. As it is plainly expreſſed by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, 33. 7, 8. *And the Juſt ſhall live by Faith.* And the Evangeliſt St. *Mark*, ſpeaks without any Reſervation. *He that believed not, ſhall be damned*; without diſtinction, whether you were ſeduced by others, or whether you have renounced your Faith for worldly Ends.

Rom. 14. 12. Rom. 9. 3. Habak. 2. 4. *Mark*, 16. 16.

§. 3. From whence it is evident, That, Religion having its relation to God, the ſame may be exerciſed without the Communion of a great many; And, that a Man ought not to judge of the Soundneſs of his Doctrine or Religion, by the Number of thoſe that adhere to it. So, that it is manifeſt, That, at the beginning of the World, our firſt Parents might, and did really perform Religious Duties; And, that, if one alone, or a few together, live in a ſolitary Place, they are therefore not to be deem'd to live without Religion, becauſe, they do not make up a Congregation, For, God being the only Judge, of what is

How the ſame is to be exerciſed in the free State of Nature.

beſt pleaſing to him in his Worſhip, knows and ſearches the very bottom of our Hearts; And, ſince we are not able, without his Aſſiſtance, to perform religious Duties, the ſame can't be eſteem'd properly our own Invention. As thoſe that live in the free State of Nature, are not Subject to any Human Power, So, in the ſame State, their Religion, having only a relation to God Almighty, unto whom alone they are bound to pay Reverence, it is free from all Human Force or Power; which, in this State of Natural Freedom, they may exerciſe, either according to the Dictates of Reaſon, or, according to Divine Revelation; and, according to the beſt of their Knowledge, may diſpoſe the outward Form of their religious Worſhip, without being accountable to any body, but God Almighty: Neither can they be Controuled, or forced, rather to worſhip God according to another's, than their own Opinion. But, if any body pretends to bring them over to his Side, he ought with ſuitable Arguments, to Convince them, how far he is in the Right, and they in the Wrong. There may be, beſides this, another Reaſon be given, why no body, in what Condition ſoever, ought to be forced to another Man's Religion; becauſe the Knowledge of Truth can't be implanted in us, without proper and convincing Arguments, ſuch as are capable of preparing our Minds for the receiving of the True Doctrine of Religion: And, as to the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion, which tranſcend our Reaſon, theſe muſt be acquired by the aſſiſtance of Divine Grace, which is contrary

trary to all Violence. 'Tis true, a Prince may force a Subject to make an outward Confession by way of Mouth, to comply in his Behaviour, with his Commands, and to dissemble his Thoughts or to speak contrary to his Belief; but he can force no body to believe contrary to his own Opinion. For we ought *to believe with all our Hearts*; but, whatever is done in order to obtain any worldly Advantage, or to avoid an imminent Evil of this kind, can't be done with all our Heart. But, *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God.* Neither does our Saviour force his Word upon us; but by all gentle means, persuades us to a Compliance with his Will, according to St. *Paul's* Saying: *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Acts, 8. 37. Rom. 10. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 20.

§. 4. It is an unquestionable Truth, and generally received among Mankind, That one is obliged to give a helping-hand to another in several Respects: In the same manner it is with Religion; that these who by nearest of Blood, are in Duty bound, to take Care of young Peoples Education, ought at the same time to Instruct them in the true Knowledge of God, and prepare their Minds for the receiving of the Christian Doctrine. 'Tis upon this score, that this Care touches most nearly all Parents, in regard of their Children, it being the principal Part of Paternal Duty, to take effectual Care, that they may be throughly Instructed in all Matters, relating to God and his holy Word; and to be encouraged in all manner of religious Exercises: For, it is

The first Care of religious Worship lodged in Parents.

too dangerous, to leave young People to their own Inclinations, till they may be capable, by the Strength of their own Reason, to learn their Duty towards God. And it would be much more dangerous, to defer it under pretence or expectation of Revelations to be made upon that account, at this time, when the Word of God is already planted and eſtabliſhed among us: Beſides, that Children ſoon grow head-ſtrong and refractory, if they are not in their tender Age, accuſtomed to pious Exerciſes. Nevertheleſs, Parents ought not to exerciſe this Paternal Office any otherwiſe, than in a manner ſuitable to the Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, which will have them not to act with Violence, but to be diligent and aſſiduous in Teaching, Exhorting, Praying, and announcing God's Wrath. Wherefore, the Prieſtly Office was originally joined with the Paternal, in the antient Fathers of Families; and *Abraham* is commended both for a good Father, and a good Maſter of his Houſe, becauſe he inſtructed his Children in all manner of Piety, and himſelf Adminiſtred Circumciſion. The like Commands were made to Parents, both in the Old and New Teſtament; and the Patriarch *Jacob*, removed the Idols out of his Family, not by Compulſion, but by Inſtructing thoſe of his Houſe in the Knowledge of the true God, who thereupon, voluntarily ſurrendred thoſe Idols to his Diſpoſal. This part of the Paternal Office, like all the reſt, does ceaſe as ſoon as a Son, after leaving his Father's Houſe, comes to ſet up for himſelf, and conſequently becomes the Father

Gen. 18. 19.
Ge. 17.20
Deut. 6.7. 11. 19.
Eph. 6. 4.
Gen. 35. 2, 3, 4.

of

a ſeparate Family, and enjoys the ſame Rights, which his Father had before over him. And, tho' perhaps in ſuch a Caſe a Father may ſtill retain the priviledge of giving ſome Paternal Admonitions to his Sons, yet ought the ſame to be look'd upon to reſemble in their Nature our laſt Will or Teſtament, which does not always imply properly a Command; but ought to be obſerved for its good Intentions ſake, and to ſhew a due Reverence to the Memory of a Father, never to be neglected by any, that will not at the ſame time profeſs themſelves guilty of Improbity.

Civil Societies were not Inſtituted for Religious ſake.

§. 5. Out of what has been ſaid before, it is moſt evident, That Civil Governments were not erected for Religions ſake; or that Man did not enter into Civil Societies, that they might with more conveniency eſtabliſh, and exerciſe their Religion. For, ſince Religious Exerciſes could be performed as well by a few, as by a great Number; and in a ſmall Congregation as well, as in a great one, it was unneceſſary to erect ſeveral great Societies on that account: Beſides, that thoſe who committed open violences againſt others, which was the firſt motive that obliged Men to enter into Societies for their mutual Defence, did not aim at the Religion of Mankind; but, to robb theſe that were weaker than themſelves of their Liberty, Life, and Fortunes. Neither does a Man's Probity and Piety receive the leaſt addition, by the Number of People, which join in their Devotion; For every one muſt be acceptable to God Almighty upon his own account; neither is a Man always deem'd the

more pious, becauſe he lives among ſuch as are pious themſelves. Thoſe Patriarchs that liv'd before Civil Societies were erected, are no leſs Famous for their Piety, than thoſe that lived afterwards under a ſettled Government. From whence it is evident, That Religion is not an ingenious Invention of the firſt Founders of Commonwealths, but as antient as Humane Raceit ſelf; it being ſufficiently apparent, that Mankind did not enter into Civil Societies, till long after, being enforced thereunto, by great and weighty Reaſons; tho' at the ſame time, it cannot be deny'd, but that ſome have cunningly abuſed Religion, for obtaining their Ends in the State; But, Religion in it ſelf conſidered, is not made ſubordinate to the State; or to be deem'd a proper Inſtrument to ſerve a States Turn, and to keep the People in Obedience. And, when Religion is called, *Vinculum Societatis Civilis*, *The Cement of Civil Society*, it muſt be taken in this Senſe; That if all Religion and Regard, which ought to be had to God's diſpleaſure, were aboliſhed, there would be no Tie left, ſtrong enough to oblige Mankind to a compliance with thoſe Laws and fundamental Conſtitutions, which are the original Foundation of all Commonwealths; And, that, without the fear of being accountable to God Almighty, no Human Power alone would be prevailing enough to bridle the Enormities of ſome ſtubborn and refractory Spirits.

§. 6. It

§. 6. It being therefore beyond queſtion, That Commonwealths were not erected for Religions ſake, it is eaſie to be underſtood, that the antient Fathers of Families, when they firſt ſubmitted themſelves under a Civil Government, were thereby, not obliged to ſurrender at the ſame time, their Religion in the ſame manner, as they did their Lives and Fortunes to their Sovereigns, for the obtaining the End of Civil Society, which was their common Security. The more, becauſe Religion was not inſtituted for the obtaining of this mutual Security, and as ſuch, do's not contribute any thing towards the maintaining of Civil Society. Religion ariſes from a much more noble Spring, than Civil Government; and more ſtrictly obliges Mankind, than any Civil Power; and therefore is unalterable in its Nature. Thus it would be not only uſeleſs, but imply a Contradiction; if a Man, who is to become a Subject to a Civil Government, ſhould be obliged to ſwear Allegiance to his Sovereign, in theſe following Terms: *J. N. N.* Submit my Will entirely to your Commands; I promiſe to love, honour, and truſt in God, according to your Pleaſure; and to put more Confidence in you than in God Almighty; to ſet aſide all your Command, all Love, Reſpect and Duty, which I owe to God Almighty, and to perform ſuch things as I know to be contrary to him and his Commands. For, here ought to be remembred, what the Apoſtles ſaid: *We ought to obey God rather than Man.* Acts 5. 29. And, whenever Sovereigns pretend to extend thus far their Authority, they tranſgreſs their Bounds; and if they inflict any Puniſhment on their

Subjects did not ſubmit their Opinions in Matters of Religion, to the Diſpoſal of their Sovereigns.

their Subjects, for refusing to be obedient to their Commands, on this Account; such an Act ought to be look'd upon, as illegal, unjust, and tyrannical. God has verified this by extraordinary Miracles: It was an absurd and illegal Proceeding, when *Darius*, overperswaded by his Courtiers, who intended to lay a Trap for *Daniel*, issued out his Proclamation, That *no body, for thirty Days should ask a Petition of any God or Man.* For, what concerns had the King with his Subjects; Prayers (unlawful Prayers, being not accepted of by God Almighty) especially with those made in private? For, if any one should have prayed in publick against the King, it would been a quite different Case; and such a one had deservedly received Punishment, as an Enemy to his Sovereign. Wherefore, *Daniel* did very well, in continuing his daily private Prayers, according to his former Custom; notwithstanding the King's impious and foolish Command; and, was, for this Reason, by an extraordinary Miracle, delivered out of the Lions Den. In the same manner did God preserve *Daniel*'s three Companions in the midst of the Flames, because they refused to worship the Golden Image, according to the King's Command: Though, at the same time, it is very probable, that this Image, set up by *Nebuchadnezar*, was not intended to be worshipped as a God; but only as a Sign or Emblem of that Eternal Being, which he would have to be Adored and Worshipped by his Subjects. Certainly, *Jeroboam*, could not be so much besides himself, as to imagine,

Dan. 6. 7. 9.

Dan. 3. 27, 28.

gine, or to pretend to perſuade the Jews, That the Golden Calves, which he had cauſed to be made, were the ſame God, by whoſe Power they were brought out of *Ægypt*; But he ſet them up as a Token, or Repreſentative, whereby to put them in mind of the Benefits received from God, the great Deliverer of *Iſrael*; and that they might not want places where to pay their Devotions, and perform their religeous Duties. So, that, though he did not fall off from God, but only, for Reaſons of State; and becauſe he thought it belonging to his Royal Prerogative, made an Alteration in the outward Form of Worſhip; Yet was he, with his whole Family, rooted out of *Iſrael*, and the Jews, for having obeyed and followed their King, in his Idolatry, paid for it with the Loſs of the *Holy Land*.

Joſeph. Arch. 8. 3. 2Reg. 19. 17, 16.

§. 7. Sovereigns are nevertheleſs, not excluded from having a certain Power and Diſpoſal in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, as they are the Supream Heads and Governours of the Commonwealth; and are therefore ſtil'd, the Publick Fathers, and Fathers of their Native Country. And, as has been ſaid before, as it is one of the Principal parts of Paternal Duty, to implant Piety into their Children; ſo Sovereigns ought to take care, that Publick Diſcipline (of which the Reverence due to God Almighty, is one main Point) to be maintained among their Subjects. And, whereas the Fear of God is the Foundation Stone of Probity, and other Moral Vertues; and it being the Intereſt of Sovereigns, that the ſame be by all means encouraged in a State; and that

What Power, according to the Law of Nature, belongs Sovereigns in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs?

Religion

Religion is the ſtrongeſt Knot for the maintaining a true Union betwixt Sovereigns and their Subjects. (God being a God of Truth, who has commanded, that Faith and Compacts ſhould be ſacred among Men:) It is therefore a Duty incumbent upon Sovereigns, to take not only effectual Care, that Natural Religion be maintain'd, and cultivated among their Subjects; But they have alſo a ſufficient Authority, to Enact ſuch Laws as may enable them, to keep their Subjects from committing any thing, which tends, either to the total Deſtruction, or the Subverſion, of the Capital Points of Religion: As if, for inſtance, any one ſhould attempt to deny publickly the Exiſtency of a God, and his Providence, to ſet up plurality of Gods; to worſhip fictitious Gods, or Idols in Gods ſtead, to ſpread abroad Blaſphemies, for to worſhip the Devil, enter with him into a Compact, and ſuch like Actions. For, if theſe are kept within the compaſs of Peoples Thoughts, without breaking out into publick or outward Actions, they are not puniſhable by the Law, neither can any Humane Power take Cognizance of what is contained only, and hidden in the Heart. And, as to what concerns thoſe Ceremonies which have been annexed to Religious Worſhip, though it be undeniable, that one of the main Points, towards the maintaining a good Order in the State is, that a due Uniformity, ſhould be obſerved in the ſame: Nevertheleſs, Sovereigns need not be ſo very anxious on this Account, becauſe theſe Differences

ferences do not Overturn Religion it self; neither do they (as such considered) dispose Subjects to raise Disturbances, and Dissention in the State. Neither can Sovereigns be any great Loosers by the Bargain, if their Subjects differ in some Ceremonies, no more, than if they were divided into several Opinions, concerning some Philosophical Doctrine. But, this is beyond all doubt, that, if under a Religious Pretext, Subjects pretend to raise Factions, which may prove dangerous to the State, or hatch other secret Mischiefs ; these are Punishable by the Supream Magistrates, notwithstanding their Religious Pretences; for, as Religion (in its self considered) is not the cause of Vices ; so ought it not to serve for a Cloak, wherewith to cover and protect such treacherous Designs. So, the *Roman Senate* did acquit themselves very well in their Station, when they Abolished these Debaucheries, which were crept into the State, with the *Bachanals*. But those Sovereigns, who have transgressed these Bounds, by compelling their Subjects to a Religion of their own Invention, have, without doubt, abused that Power, wherewith they were entrusted. Neither have these Princes acquitted themselves much better in their Station, who have Persecuted their Subjects, for no other Reason, but because they Professed a Religion different from their own, without making a due Enquiry, whether their Doctrine were Erroneous or not. Thus the Proceedings of *Pliny* the Younger, (a Man otherwise of a very

Lev. 39. 9, 10.

good

good Temper) againſt the Chriſtians in *Bithynia*, cannot in any wiſe be juſtified; For he confeſſes himſelf, That he never was preſent at the Tryals of the Chriſtians; and was therefore ignorant both of their Crime, and conſequently, of what Puniſhment they deſerved. For theſe are his Words: *I only ask ſome of them ſeveral times, whether they were Chriſtians; which they having conſtantly Profeſſed they were, I ordered them to be carried to the Place of Execution; it being plain to me, That, of what Nature ſoever their Confeſſion might be, ſuch an inflexible Humour, and obſtinate Behaviour, ought not to go unpuniſhed.*

Plin. 10. Ep. 97.

Of the Nature of revealed Religion.

§. 8. But the Condition of Mankind being ſuch, That it was impoſſible by the ſole help of Natural Religion, to attain to that Felicity which was propoſed by the great Creator; it had pleaſed the Great and All-wiſe God, to reveal unto us Mortals his Will; and to inſtruct us by what means we may obtain his Favour, and how he expects to be Worſhipped by us. It is for this reaſon, that no body of a right Underſtanding ought to make the leaſt Scruple, but, that all ſuch Matters as God has revealed to us, in a manner ſurpaſſing our Natural Underſtanding, ought to be reverenced by Mankind, and to be received with a general conſent and ſubmiſſion. Among the ſeveral Doctrines, thus revealed, the Article of Juſtification, or the Purging us from Sins through the Merits of our Saviour, was one of the Principal ones. And, I am of Opinion, that theſe bloody Sacrifices, which from the very Beginning of the

the World were Inſtituted by God's Command, were ſo many Emblems of this our Redemption by the Blood of Chriſt; for, without this ſuppoſition, it would ſeem ſcarce Rational, that a living Creature, ſenſible of Death and Pains, and which cannot be killed without great Torments, ſhould be deſtroyed for the Honour of its Creator. As if Man ſhould enter into the Work-Houſe of an Artificer, and by deſtroying his Handy-Work, pretend to do him an extraordinary Honour. This moſt Antient way of Sacrificing (the chief Badge of True Religion, before it was Corrupted by Ignorance or Superſtition) though it was no ſmall addition to Natural Religion; yet did it cauſe no alteration as to the Exerciſe of it. For, in the State of Natural Freedom, every one had a right to Sacrifice, though at the ſame time, every one was not obliged to Sacrifice for himſelf. For, this Ceremony of Sacrificing being only an Emblem, repreſenting the future Redemption of Mankind, one and the ſame Sacrifice might anſwer that End, in reſpect to all that were preſent at the time of the Sacrifice. From hence it was become a Cuſtom, that the Heads of each Family uſed to Sacrifice for the reſt; and if more Families were aſſembled in order to Sacrifice, it was to be Adminiſtred by him that was choſen by the reſt, for that purpoſe. And it is obſervable, that the ſame Perſon that had the Right of Sacrificing, had alſo the Power of preſcribing time and place for that Sacrifice. Thus when afterwards God had Ordained the Ceremony or Sacrament of Circumciſion; *Abraham* did Adminiſter the

the ſame in his Houſe, as being the Father of his Family. What we have alledged concerning the Right of Sacrificing, may be proved from thence, that both *Abel* and *Cain*, after they had left their Fathers Houſe, did Sacri-
Gen. 4. 3, 4. fice. And by ſeveral Paſſages in *Geneſis*, we are informed, That the Antient Patriarchs (being Fathers of their Families) did erect Altars. So, *Micha* ſet up a Houſe of Gods at home, during the Anarchy in *Iſrael*, there being then neither King nor any other Man, that took care of the Publick Worſhip; thus attributing
Jude 17. 5, 6. to himſelf (though unjuſtly) the ſame Right, which the Ancient Fathers of Families had been poſſeſs'd of in more Antient Times.

Amongſt the Jews there was a ſtrict Union betwixt the Church and State.

§. 9. It had pleaſed God, according to his Wiſdom, not to ſend our Saviour, or the Meſſias into the World ſoon after the Creation, at a time when the whole World was not ſtockt with a ſufficient number of Inhabitants; leſt his Sufferings might be obliterated by Oblivion, or by a too long Tract of Time, turned into a Fabulous Relation: But he was to appear amongſt us, after the whole Earth was filled up every where with Inhabitants, and Mankind was arrived, as it was, to its Age of Perfection. It was alſo thought convenient, and almoſt neceſſary, that the Meſſias ſhould not appear in this World all upon a ſudden, but after his Coming had been long foretold and expected, in order to raiſe a more ardent deſire after him in us Mortals; and that he might find the eaſier a Reception amongſt us, when his Deeds were found ſo agreeable to what was Propheſied concerning him, ſo many Ages be-

fore.

fore. And, that these Predictions or Prophesies might not, through length of time, come to decay, and be buried in Oblivion, God Almighty had in a most peculiar manner, recommended them to the Care and Custody of the Jews, amongst whom, he, as it may be said, kept his Records of Prophesies; it being the most likely, that that same Nation, from whence the Messias was one day to have his Off spring as Man, upon Earth, would preserve them with their utmost Care, to their great Honour and Advantage. It was questionless in a great measure for this Reason, that God entered with them into so strict a League, Circumcision being made the Bagde, whereby to distinguish them from other Nations: And being afterwards become a very numerous People, and freed from the *Ægyptian* Bondage, he himself established at once, both their Civil Government and Religion, (which was not to cease, till the appearing of our Saviour on Earth;) and this in such a manner, that there was always to remain a strict Union betwixt their Religion and State. Therefore the Administration of Religious Worship was committed to one particular Tribe amongst them, unto whom, according to God's special Command, no Lands were allotted, lest they might thereby be inticed to mind Temporal Possessions and Riches, more than God's Service; but were to be maintained out of the Tenths and other Revenues belonging to the Altar, in which Sense God is called, *The Portion of the Levites.* There was also a certain place assigned for the Publick Exercise of Di-

vine Worſhip, with Exlcuſion of all others; and their whole Religion was thus diſpoſed by God's peculiar Order, that the ſame could not be put in practiſe, unleſs it were in a free Nation, independent from any Foreign Power. This was the true Reaſon why the Jews, unleſs they would overturn the Foundation of their Religion, could not be entirely United with any Foreign State. And, as the Jewiſh Religion and State were of the ſame Date, their Laws both Excleſiaſtical and Civil having been Conſtituted at the ſame time, and contained in one Book; ſo was the Union betwixt their Religion and State, ſo entire, that the firſt could not remain ſtanding, after the fall of the laſt; and therefore the deſtruction of the Temple, and of the Commonwealth of the Jews, was an infallible Sign of the total abolitiment of their Religion. They were called God's People, and the Holy People, becauſe the whole Jewiſh Nation publickly profeſſed the True Religion.

Who was the Supream Head of the Jewiſh Church.

§. 10. But, becauſe God himſelf had Eſtabliſhed the Jewiſh Religion and Ceremonies and fortified them by very ſevere Laws, no body upon Earth had Power to make the leaſt alteration in them, or to add any thing to, or to diminiſh from them. The Kings, *Saul* and *Uſiah* paid dearly for it, becauſe they attempted to interfere with the Levites in their Office. And thoſe of the Jews that introduced a Foreign Religious Service, are in the Holy Scripture Branded with Infamy. So that their Kings had no further Power in Religious Concerns, than the Supream Inſpection, that every

ry one in his Station (not excepting the High Prieſt himſelf) did Exerciſe his Office, according to God's Commands; and that the Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions were kept inviolable. Neither did the Tribe of *Levi*, or the Prieſtly Order make up a ſeparate Body independent from the State, but they were actually conſidered as part of the Nation, and Subjects of their Kings; who, as we read, ſometimes Depoſed them for ſeveral Crimes, and if negligent in their Office, uſed to give them ſevere Rebukes. King *David* went further, for he, to maintain a decent Order in the Church, diſpoſed the ſeveral Eccleſiaſtical Functions among the Prieſts and Levites, and ordered that the Singers and Door-waitors ſhould take their places by Lott, which nevertheleſs was not done without the Advice of the Chief Men and Elders of the People, and the whole Tribe of *Levi*. In ſo doing, he did not aſſume to himſelf the Power of Diſpoſing or Altering any thing in their Religion, but only over thoſe that were Ordained by God Almighty for that Function, *viz.* to Eſtabliſh ſuch an Order among them, the better to enable them to Exerciſe their Function without Confuſion. 1 Chron. 5. 26. ſeq.

For, when afterwards, inſtead of the Tabernacle, a Temple was to be Erected, that is to ſay, when inſtead of a ſlight and decayed Building, a moſt noble and firm Structure was to be built, the ſame was not undertaken without God's Advice. This Temple being the Principal of all Publick Structures, it was the King's Care to ſee it Repaired in due time, who alſo might levy a Tax for that uſe, and provide

for the neceſſary Expences of the Workmen; it is very remarkable, that we do not read in the Scriptures, that any of thoſe Kings that introduced Foreign Service among the Jews, did ever attempt to force by Threats, or otherwiſe, their Subjects to ſuch a Worſhip, but rather by ſeveral Allurements enticed them to follow their Example, and that ſuch as were thus ſeduced, did, as well as their King, receive Condign Puniſhment from God, accordingly; And that ſuch among the Jews as abhorred this Idolatry, ought not to be look'd upon as Rebellious Subjects upon that ſcore, but as Perſons that did bear this Publick Calamity with Patience. And, as thoſe Kings, that Aboliſhed Idolatry and Foreign Worſhip amongſt the Jews, are highly extolled in the Scriptures, ſo thoſe Impious Kings, that were the Authors of this Idolatry, were by the high Rank, they bore in the State, exempted from the ordinary Puniſhment, which according to God's Ordinance, was elſe to be inflicted upon all others, that ſhould attempt to introduce Idolatry. Laſtly, another remarkable Obſervation may be made as to the Jewiſh Religion; that, whereas there was ſo ſtrict an Unity betwixt the State and Religion, that the latter might juſtly be called the Foundation Stone of the firſt, and God had expreſly enjoyned them an exact obſervance of it, under forfeiture of the quiet Poſſeſſion of that Country, where their Commonwealth was Eſtabliſhed; the Felicity of the State, depended abſolutely from the due obſervance of that Religion, and the Civil Magiſtrates were to take cogni-

cognizance of all ſuch Matters, as might prove either dangerous or deſtructive to it; as it may plainly appear by the Law of God, preſcribed in this behalf, in the Books of *Moſes*.

The Genius of the Chriſtian Religion is quite different from that of the Jews.

§. 11. The Chriſtian Religion differs in many points from that of the Jews; not only becauſe it repreſents our Saviour to us, as he has already appeared upon Earth, and thereby has freed us from theſe many Ceremonies and Sacrifices, which were ſo many Emblems of his future coming amongſt us; but alſo, becauſe the Chriſtian Religion is, by God's peculiar Providence, endowed with ſuch Qualifications, that it ought, and may be received by all Nations without Prejudice, and conſequently deſerves the Name of an Univerſal Religion; whereas the Divine Worſhip of the Jews, was ſo adapted to that State, as ſcarce to be ſuitable to any other, being unacceſſible to any other Nation but their own; the Chriſtian Religion on the other hand, is now-a-days not tyed up to a certain Place or Temple, but every where *Men may pray, lifting up holy hands.* We need not appear before God with ſumptuous Sacrifices; but thoſe Sacrifices which are acceptable to God, are to be purchaſed without Gold or Silver. Neither is the Miniſtry of the Goſpel granted as a peculiar Priviledge to one particular Nation or Family, but the Chriſtians in general are called *Prieſts before God*, and no body is excluded from that Miniſtry, provided he be endued with the neceſſary Qualifications; except that St. *Paul* forbids Women to Teach. Laſtly, Each Nation has an equal ſhare in the Chriſtian Religion; neither can

1 Tim. 2. 8.

Apocal. 1. 6. 5. 10.

1 Tim. 11. 12.

any of them claim a peculiar Right or Prerogative before others, every one having equal ſhare in the Merits of Chriſt. *Here is neither Jew nor Greek; here is neither Bond nor Free, neither Male nor Female; for ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus.* There is *neither Greek nor Jew, Circumciſion, or Uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free, but Chriſt is all, and in all.* But becauſe the Chriſtian Religion is not like the Jewiſh, adapted to one particular State, that had its riſe at the ſame time with this Religion, but was introduced after Civil Societies were erected throughout the World. The main point now in queſtion is, Whether after this Religion has been introduced, it has altered the Nature of Civil Societies, or the Rights of Sovereigns; and whether by its eſtabliſhment a new ſort of Government, ſeparate and independent from the Civil Power, has been introduced? Or, which is the ſame in effect. Whether the Church is to be conſidered as a State ſeparate and independent from the Civil Covernment, which ought to be Governed and Maintained by Human Force and Power? By the Word State, we underſtand a conſiderable number of People, who being joyned in one Society, independent from another, are Governed by their own Laws and Governors.

Gal. 3.28. Coloſſ. 3. 11. *Vide* 1 Tim. 11. 14.

How Moſes behaved himſelf when he laid the Foundation of the Jewiſh Commonwealth.

§. 12. To trace the very Original of this point, the Behaviour of *Moſes*, the Founder both of the Jewiſh Church and State, muſt be taken into due conſideration; and how far different Jeſus Chriſt, the Saviour of Mankind, and Founder of the Chriſtian Church, ſhewed himſelf

himself in his Behaviour, from *Moses*. *Moses* was commanded by God, to deliver the Posterity of the Patriarchs from the Bondage of *Ægypt*, and to lead them according to God's Govenant with them, into *Canaan*, the Land of Promise; where he was to Erect a New Commonwealth, and to Establish their Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws at the same time. The better therefore to Establish his Authority not only amongst his Country-men, (over whom he had no other Lawful Jurisdiction) but also to gain Credit with the *Ægyptians*, that hitherto had kept the others under their Jurisdiction; he did, by his Extraordinary and Miraculous Deeds, give them most evident Demonstrations of his Divine Commission, and of a secret Correspondence with God Almighty. These Miracles struck such a Terror into the Ægyptian King, that his Obstinacy was at last overcome; who else, in all likelihood, would not have parted, upon easie terms, with so vast a number of his Subjects; Their number being sufficient to make up a new and strong People: And the Jews moved by his Miracles, and in acknowledgment of the Benefits received from his Hands, and being sensible that *God stood by him in all his Undertakings*, willingly received him for their Prince and General. As long as he lived he exercised this Princely Authority in the highest degree; for, he did Constitute amongst them both their Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws, and Ordained and Established their whole Government. He used to Administer Justice, Inflict Punishents upon those that were found Criminal, he had the Power of Consti-

tuting

tuting Magistrates and others, that were to aid and assist him in his Office, and those that attempted against his Authority, he made sensible of their Folly, by inflicting most severe Punishments upon them. There was all that time no occasion for the levying of Taxes upon the People, except what was requisite for the Maintainance and Ornament of their Publick Religious Service. He was very watchful for the Preservation of the People, and if they were Attack'd by their Enemies, used to defend them by Force of Arms. Lastly, when he knew that he was shortly to depart this Life, he Constituted his Successor, who was to be their General, and under whose Conduct they were to be put into Possession of the so long desired Land of Promise; from whence it is very evident, that *Moses*, as long as he lived, bore the Office of a Prince, and that he was the Founder of the State or Commonwealth of the Jews.

What, on the other hand our Saviour did when he established his Church.

§. 13. But if we look upon our Saviour Jesus Christ, he acted in a quite different manner; from whence it was very evident, that his intention was not to Erect a new State here upon Earth. 'Tis true, he gained to himself a great deal of Credit and Authority by his Miracles; but these were no terrifying Miracles, or such as ever proved injurious to any. So, when his Disciples would have persuaded him, to command fire to come down from Heaven, and consume those that refused to receive him, they met with a severe Rebuke. The main Demonstrations he used to give them of his Divinity, always tended to the benefit

Luke 9. 54 55.

of

of others, and the Miracles performed by him, were of such a nature, as must needs attract the love and favour of all Men; and at the same time were apparent and convincing Proofs of his Divinity, not any thing less than a Divine Power being able to cause a new Motion or Alteration in the course of Nature, without Natural means. For *he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil.* All which had not the least Relation towards the laying of the Foundation of a new State. He had some Disciples, but these were few in number, unarmed, poor, of a mean Profession and Condition, and of so little Authority, that it was impossible for them to make the least pretension of setting up a State of their own, or of raising any Commotions or Disturbances in another State. And when the multitude, in acknowledgment of the benefits received by his Doctrine and Miracles, would at several times have proclaimed him King, he absconded and made his escape. The principal Care he took of his Followers, was to instruct them by his Doctrine, from whence they were called Disciples, and they in return, used to give him the Name of Master or Teacher. Neither did he Constitute any new Laws, (at least not any that could be supposed to have any reference towards the Establishment of a new State) but the Antient Law, as far as it was given to Mankind in general, was explained, and the People exhorted to a due observance of it. He did never execute the Office of a Judge, nay he refused to be an Arbitrator, to convince the World that his

Acts 10. 38.

Luke 12. 13, 14.

Joh. 8 11.

coming

coming was intended for no such purpose. Lastly, he did himself pay Taxes to others; and, tho' it was in his Power to prevent it, suffered himself to be Judged and Executed. All which is altogether inconsistent with the Nature and Office of a Temporal Sovereign.

Christ did not Constitute a new People.

§. 14. This will appear more clearly to us, if we duly consider, that Christ never acted according to the Rules of those that intend to lay the Foundation of a new State. For, their principal and first care is to Constitute a new People, that is, to bring over to their side such a number of People, as are willing and sufficient to be joyned under one Civil Government. This Multitude of People is either Assembled at once, and drawn out of another Commonwealth, as *Moses* did; or by degrees brought over out of other Commonwealths, as *Romulus* gathered the People of *Rome*. But it is easie to be seen, that our Saviour's Intention was of a quite different Nature. His Disciples were not so many in number, as to have the least resemblance with a Nation or People, neither were they instructed in those matters, which have the least relation to the Establishment of a new Commonwealth. Their dependance from him was not near the same, which Subjects have of their Prince, having never sworn Allegiance to him; but only as Disciples from their Master, being influenced by the Love and Admiration they had both for his Person and Doctrine. Sometimes a great Multitude of People would flock about him, but these only came to hear him Preach, and to be Spectators of his Miracles, which being done, they return'd to their re-

John 6. 66, 67, 68

spective

ſpective homes. And Chriſt never ſhewed the leaſt inclination to command over, or to withdraw them from the Obedience due to their Sovereigns. Laſtly, when the time of his Death approached, his moſt truſty and particular Friends and Followers abſconded, and durſt not as much as make any publick appearance. When we therefore ſpeak of Chriſtians, we do not underſtand a certain Nation or People, ſubject to any particular Government, but in general, all ſuch, as make profeſſion of a certain Doctrine or Religion.

Chriſt had no Territories belonging to him.

§. 15. One of the main points which thoſe that intend to Eſtabliſh a new Commonwealth ought to take care of, is how to acquire conſiderable Territories, where their new Subjects may ſettle themſelves and their Fortunes. So, *Moſes*, when he ſaw it not fecible to ſet up the Jewiſh Commonwealth within the bounds of *Ægypt*, led them into the Deſert, and through ſuch places as were not ſubject to any particular Government; till ſuch time, that they Conquered the Land of *Canaan*, and rooted out its Antient Inhabitants. Neither were the Jews, before they were put into Poſſeſſion of this Country, the leſs free, for they were then a Nation independent from any Foreign Power; and though they ſometimes marched upon the Borders of other Princes, nevertheleſs were they not, during that time, ſubject to their Juriſdiction; partly, becauſe no body ever laid any particular claim to thoſe Territories, or if ſome of them did, they marched through them like Soldiers of Fortune, ready to make good their Pretences and Titles to theſe Lands,

by

by the edge of their Swords. But Christ did say, of himself, *That he was so poor, as he had* Mat. 8. 20. *not where to lay his head.* He was always so far from attempting to acquire any Possessions or Territories, or to encourage his Followers to do it, that he rather chose to live during the whole course of his life in other Territories and under Civil Jurisdiction.

Christ did not exircise the Office of a Prince.

§. 16. There are a great many other remarkable Circumstances from whence it may plainly be inferred, that Christ never did, nor intended, to appear, as a Prince, here upon Earth. When the Mother of the Sons of *Zebedeus*, begged of our Saviour, that her Sons might be prefer'd to the Chiefest Dignities in the Kingdom of Christ, he rebuked her for her ignorance, and Propheſied to his Followers a very slender share of outward Splendor and temporal Preferments, but abundance of Persecution; nay, he plainly told and enjoyned his Disciples, that they should not strive for Pre-eminency over one another, as Temporal Princes do. *It shall*, says he, *not be so amongst you*, ordering them to live in an equal and Brotherlike degree with one another. And, to remove, by his own Example, all remnants of Pride, he in their presence, did abase himself to that degree of Servitude, as to wash the feet of St. *Peter*. Lastly, it is of great Consequence at the first Establishment of a new Commonwealth, that its Founder be long-lived, that thereby he may be enabled, to lay a more solid Foundation of the new Government. For this reason it was that *David*'s Soldiers would not any longer suffer him to expose his

Vid. Mat. 20. 20.

Luke 20. 26.

John 13. 9, 10.

Person

Perſon in Battel, leſt *the light of Iſrael ſhould be extinguiſhed*; the loſs of his own Perſon being eſteemed more than of a great many thouſands. But our Saviour did ſurrender himſelf voluntarily to death, after he had ſcarce four years appeared in Publick, and that without appointing a Succeſſor, who was to exerciſe any Power or Authority over thoſe, that followed his Doctrine, 2 Sam. 21. 17.

§. 17. As now Chriſt, during his abode here upon Earth, did not make the leaſt appearance or outward ſhew, reſembling the greatneſs of Temporal Princes; and, as out of all his Actions there cannot be gathered the leaſt thing, which may prove his intention to have been to erect a new State or Commonwealth; ſo it is ſufficiently apparent, that, during the whole courſe of his publick Converſation on Earth, he employed all his Time and Labour in publiſhing the Word of God. So that in the Quality of a Doctor or Teacher, he appeared to the Eyes of all the World; whereas his Office of being the Saviour of Mankind, was at that time underſtood, only by ſuch, as were capable of applying the Antient Oracles of the Prophets to his Perſon. Furthermore, our Saviour to eſtabliſh and ſhew his Authority, made uſe of ſuch Miracles, as might be evident proofs of his Divine Power, partly, becauſe the Antient Ceremonies which were to be aboliſhed, were firſt ordained by God's ſpecial Command; partly, becauſe the principal Heads of his Doctrine were ſurpaſſing all Human Underſtanding. But, as for his way of Teaching, *But that of a Doctor or Teacher.* John 1. 29.

it was plain, and free from Vanity, without all affectation, wherein appeared nothing which juſtly might cauſe the leaſt ſuſpicion of fictitious Worſhip. Notwithſtanding his Doctrine appeared thus in her Native and Pure Simplicity, yet, ſo powerful were its Charms, that all what Human Art, Dexterity, Eloquence has been able to invent of that kind, if compared to the ſolid Expeſſions of our Saviour, is only ſuperficial and inſipid. Neither do we find, that he made uſe of any outward means to promote his Doctrine. He did not call to his aid the Power and Authority of Civil Magiſtates, to force People to receive his Words. The Word was there, *He that can take, let him take it.* And how often do we read that he exclaimed to them, *He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear.* It was not God Almighty's pleaſure to pull People head-long into Heaven, or to make uſe of the new French way of Converting them by Dragoons; But, he has laid open to us the way of our Salvation, in ſuch a manner, as not to have quite debarr'd us from our own choiſe; ſo, that if we will be refractory, we may prove the cauſe of our own Deſtruction. Neither, did it pleaſe Almighty God to inveigle Mankind by the Allurements of Profit and Temporal Pleaſures, but rather to foretel thoſe, that ſhould follow his Doctrine, nothing but Adverſities, Calamities, Perſecutions and all ſorts of Afflictions; reſerving the chiefeſt Reward till after this Life, where alſo ſuch as had neglected his Doctrine, were to receive condign Puniſhment. This is the moſt evident

Mat. 11. 15. 13. 9. 43. Luke 8. 8. 14. 35

Proof

Proof that can be given of the intrinsick Value and extraordinary Worth of the Christian Doctrine; the natural Constitution of Mankind in general, being such as to be chiefly moved with those Objects that are present and affect our Senses; whereas those things that are represented to our Minds at a distance, are but faintly received, and often meet with dubious Interpretations. It is worth our Observation, what Method Christ made use of in his Doctrine, *viz.* That *he taught as one having Authority*, as it is expressed by *Matth.* 7. 29. not as the Scribes, that is; he had no recourse to the Authority and Traditions of their Antient *Rabbi*'s, so as to set up for an Interpreter of their antient Laws, but he spoke Lord-like, and as a Legislator, who had a lawful Authority belonging to himself, to propose his Doctrine. It is my Will and Command, who is it that dare gain-say me? And in this one point only Christ exercised his Regal Power, as well as his Office of Teaching, when he promised great and ample Rewards to all such, as should receive his Doctrine, threatening with Eternal Damnation all those that should refuse to hearken to it. *He that believed not, is condemned already*, are his Words; quite contrary as it is with other speculative Sciences, the Ignorance of which makes no body liable to Punishments. And, in this Sense is to be taken what is related of our Saviour by St. *John*; The reason why the Jews were so bent to the Destruction of Christ, was, because they abominated his Doctrine; nor would they acknowledge him for the same Messias, which was promised so

John 3. 18.

18. 37.

long before. But having at that time no Criminal Jurisdiction belonging to themselves, they were oliged to forge Treason and Rebellion against him, as if his design was to make himself King of the Jews. Jesus therefore being examined by *Pilate* concerning this Accusation, *did not deny it, but witnessed a good Con-*
1 Tim. 6. 13. *fession*, viz. *That his Kingdom was not of this World*, which is as much as to say; His Kingdom was not like those of Temporal Princes, who exercise Acts of Sovereignty over their Subjects. For, if he had pretended to the same Prerogatives, he might have commanded his Servants, not his timerous Disciples, but those strong Legions of Angels, who always stand ready to his Command, to protect their Lord from falling into the Hands of *Pilate*. And when *Pilate* replied, *That he then professed himself to be a King*,
Joh. 18. 37. he answered, That *he was King, but a King of Truth, and that for this cause he came into the World, that he should bear witness unto Truth. Pilate*, by what Christ had professed, soon understood that this matter did not fall under his Cognizance, and therefore answered, *What is Truth*? As if he would have said, if nothing else can be objected against you, but that you make profession of Truth, I have no further business with you; for Truth is not subject to any Temporal Jurisdiction. Neither did the Laws of the Roman Empire, wherein so many Nations were comprehended, take any Cogni-
16, 14, 15, 24, 29, 26, 31, 32. zance at that time, of the various Opinions of their Subjects in matters of Religion, as it plainly appears out of the *Acts*,

and

and out of the Apology of *Athenagoras*. It was for this reaſon that *Pilate* would have diſcharged him, if he had not at laſt thought it more convenient, to appeaſe the rage of the Jews by Sacrificing him, though Innocent, to their Fury. But after Chriſt had once made this open Confeſſion, he refuſed to make any further anſwer to *Pilate*, being ſenſible that *Pilate* was not deſirous to be inſtructed in this Truth. The Kingdom of Chriſt therefore, is a Kingdom of Truth, where he, by the force of Truth, brings over our Souls to his Obedience; and this Truth has ſuch powerful Charms, that the Kingdom of Chriſt needs not to be maintained by the ſame forcible means and Rules, by which Subjects muſt be kept in Obedience to the Civil Powers. And for the ſame reaſon it is, that there need not be eſtabliſhed a particular State, in order to propagate and preſerve Truth, no more, than it is neceſſary, to ſet up a ſeparate Commonwealth, where Philoſophy and other Sciences are to be taught. For, it is the true Genius of Truth, and ſuch her intrinſick vertue, as to be convincing in it ſelf, provided ſhe be but re, preſented in her genuine Shape; and the fruits, which ſhe produces for the benefit of Mankind, be dexterouſly propoſed to the view of the World. But the divine Truth has, beyond all others, this particular prerogative, that by vertue, and with the aſſiſtance of God's Grace our Minds are inſenſibly drawn into a Belief of thoſe things, that otherwiſe ſeem to ſurpaſs human Underſtanding.

The Apostles propagated the Doctrine of Christ.

§. 18. Christ, after having withdrawn himself from Human Conversation, did Substitute in this Kingdom of Truth his Apostles, but not in the same Rank with himself; not as Kings, but as Ministers and Heralds, to publish his Doctrine. *As my Father, said he, had sent me, even so send I you.* But how had the Father sent him? *viz. To preach the Gospel to the Poor, to heal the broken Hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives*, as it is expressed by *Isaiah* and St. *Luke*; So, that the Title of King, of Truth, was a peculiar Title, appertaining to Christ alone. He tells them, *Be you not called Masters, for one is your Master, Christ.* And their Calling was, to Teach all Nations, to observe all things whatsoever Christ had Commanded. St. *Paul* called his Function *a Ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testifie the Gospel of the Grace of God.* The Apostles had the first Rank among Christ's Followers, but the word Apostle implies as much as a Missionary, or one that is sent by another. So, that they had no other Power or Authority from themselves, to Teach their Doctrine, but to Instruct others in what they had received from Christ. And, when, after the Death of our Saviour, they were quite dejected, and put into a panick Fear, He, by sending the Holy Ghost did so comfort and strengthen them, that they appeared in Publick, and inspite of the *Jews*, and all the Danger that threatned them, preached the Doctrine of the Gospel. But the diversity of Languages being a main obstacle towards the spreading abroad of any

Joh. 20. 21. Isa. 61. 1. & Luk. 4. 18. Mat 23. 10 Mat. 28. 20. Act. 20. 24 Ephes. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 14. 9.

Doctrine,

Doctrine, the Apoſtles were by the Holy Ghoſt upon *Whitſunday*, Endowed with the Gift of ſpeaking various Languages, to enable them, to bring the Nations into one Union of Faith; It being otherwiſe a Maxim of State received by thoſe that intend to lay the Foundation of a new Commonwealth, to take care, that no more than one Language be uſed among their Subjects. It is alſo worth our taking Notice of, that among thoſe Languages which the Apoſtles ſpoke, there were Languages of ſome Nations, that were then Subjects to the *Parthian Empire*, which was at that time in the ſame degree of Enmity and Hatred with the *Romans*, as may now a-days be obſerved betwixt the *Germans* and *Turks*. Notwithſtanding this mortal Hatred betwixt theſe ſeveral Nations, and the difficulties which were to be ſurmounted in keeping a Correſpondence betwixt them, which could not but be a main Obſtacle to their being ever united under one Head or Government, the Union of Faith was introduced among them, under the Kingdom of Truth.

The Apoſtles had received their Power of teaching from God alone, without any dependance from any Temporal Power.

§. 19. The Apoſtles had nevertheleſs much more Authority for the exerciſing of their Function, than others, who profeſs Human Sciences or Doctrines; For, theſe cannot pretend to any lawful Authority of Teaching, in publick, unleſs with Conſent, or at leaſt Connivance of the Higher Powers, who may put a ſtop to them at Pleaſure. But the Caſe is quite different with the Apoſtles, who having received their Commiſſion of Teaching from Chriſt, the ſame cannot be annul-

led by any Civil Power, ſo, as to oblige them either to be ſilent, or to alter their Doctrine, when commanded; neither can they be eſteemed diſobedient or rebellious, if they refuſe, in this Point, to follow the Commands of Civil Magiſtrates. It is very remarkable what Chriſt ſpoke to his Apoſtles by way of Preface, when he was juſt going to put them into Poſſeſſion of their Office, Theſe were his Words: *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth.* And that this Power might not be miſtaken for a Temporal Authority, as exerciſed by Sovereigns over their Subjects, but to be underſtood of the Power of leading Mankind, and ſhewing them the true Way to Salvation, plainly appears out of our Saviour's Words, when he ſpeaks thus concerning himſelf to his heavenly Father: *As thou haſt given him power over all Fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal Life to as many as thou haſt given him. And this is eternal Life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* And in St. *Luke*: *He that heared you, heared me, and he that deſpiſed you, deſpiſed me; and he that deſpiſed me, deſpiſed him that ſent me.* The holy Apoſtles therefore could not by any Civil Power on Earth be abſolved from this Command of Preaching the Doctrine of Chriſt throughout the World, and Baptizing ſuch as received this Doctrine. They were inſtructed with the Gift of doing Miracles, as a Proof of their Authority, and Verity of their Doctrine, which being now ſufficiently propogated and received by ſo many, theſe Miriacles are become uſeleſs: Like it is the

Mat. 28. 18.

S. Joh. 17. 2, 3.

10, 16.

Cuſtom

Cuſtom in ſome Conntries, that new Laws are publiſhed, under the Sound of Trumpets, which is never repeated after the firſt Promulgation: They having then received their Authority from Chriſt, it was a vain Expropriation which was made to St. *Paul* by the *Athenians*, when they ſaid: *What will this Babler ſay*? Neither could they be juſtly puniſhed, becauſe they went about to aboliſh the antiently received Rites and Ceremonies; And when they were commanded to deſiſt from ſpreading their Doctrine, they might legally refuſe to be obedient in this Caſe; For, *they ought to obey God rather than Men*; Nay, they were rather to undergo corporal Puniſhment, than to renounce the Doctrine of Chriſt. And thoſe Princes, that violently oppoſed the Chriſtian Doctrine, are ſo far from having exerciſed a legal Civil Authority, that they have rather made themſelves guilty of a moſt enormous Crime againſt the Divine Majeſty, by violating his Legats or Miniſters, it being ſufficiently known, that publick Miniſters, ſent by Temporal Princes, are eſteemed inviolable.

Act. 17. 18.

Acts 4. 19. 5. 29.

Mat. 10. 28, 32, 33.

The Apoſtles never aſſumed a Power to Command.

§. 20. Beſides this Power of Preaching the Goſpel, (even in oppoſition to any Civil Command) there is nothing to be met withal in the whole Apoſtolical Doctrine, that has the leaſt reſemblance of Command or force. 'Tis not to be denied, but that ſometimes Teaching cannot ſo well be performed without ſomething of Force or Command, eſpecially among young People; But this has its off-ſpring from the Paternal Authority, and is from h nce derived unto others. But the Apoſtles

ſtles were to Teach whole Nations, ſuch as were independent from others, and paſt all School Diſcipline. And what could one ſingle Body, or perhaps two, and that without Weapons, pretend to do by Force againſt whole Nations and Commonwealths? It was therefore; That the Apoſtle ſaid: *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of Strong-holds, caſting down Imaginations, and every high thing, that exalted it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every Thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* And theſe Weapons are more plainly deſcribed in the foregoing 6 *Chap.* to be, *Patience, Tribulations, Neceſſities, Diſtreſſes, Stripes, Impriſonments, Labours, Faſtings, Watchings, Pureneſs, Knowledge, Kindneſs, the Holy Ghoſt, unfeigned Love; the Word of Truth, the Power of God, the Armour of Righteouſneſs,* and ſuch like, as may more at large appear out of ſeveral places, eſpecially out of the Epiſtle to the *Epheſ.* 6. 11, out of the 2*d.* to the *Corinth.* 8. 8, 9, 7. to the *Coloſſ.* 1. 23, 25; and out of the 2*d.* to the *Theſſal.* 3. 12, 14, 15.

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

2 Cor. 6. 4. ſeq.

Luk. 14. 23.

'Tis true, in the Parallel of the great Supper, the Maſter of the Feaſt orders his Servants, to go out, and compel them to come into his Houſe, which is as much to ſay, as to oblige them to come in, but not by forcible Means or Threatnings; or to pull them in by Head and Shoulders, but in ſuch a manner as was ſuitable to an invitation to ſo great a Feaſt, by Prayers and Exhortations, and making them ſenſible of the Majeſty and Greatneſs both of the Maſter and the Feaſt. In the ſame

manner

manner as St. *Paul* expreſſes it: *We are Ambaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* And, what can be more evident,, than that Ambaſſadours never pretend to any Authority over thoſe, unto whom they are ſent, but that their Negotiations ought to be accompliſhed by force of Reaſon and Perſwaſions. The word alſo of *feeding*, which is uſed by St. *John* implies nothing of Command, but only the due Adminiſtration of Food; eſpecially, ſince our Saviour told expreſly to *Peter*, *Feed my ſheep*, not thine; leſt he ſhould be apt to imagine by the ſaid words, he had liberty given him to uſe his Flock according to his own Diſcretion; But, to make him ſenſible, he was bound up to the ſame Rules, which the Patriarch *Jacob* had formerly preſcribed to himſelf. Laſtly, our Saviour is very plain in this Point, when he ſays: And *whoſoever ſhall not receive you, nor hear your Words, when you depart out of that Houſe or City, ſhake off the Duſt of your Feet, leaving them to receive condign Puniſhment for this Contempt of the Goſpel, at the Day of Judgment.* This was actually performed by St. *Paul* at *Antiocha*, and *Corinth*. But thoſe Rules which are preſcribed in the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, Chap. 11. from *v.* 2, to 22, 23, 24; and 1 *Corinth.* Chap. 14; as alſo in *Tim.* 2. 8 *Ver. Chap.* 5. 9 *Ver.* and ſome other paſſages of the ſame nature, do not imply any Command or Legiſlative Power, but are only Moral Precepts, and Points of Doctrine.

2 Cor. 5. 20. Chap. 21. Gen. 31, 38, 39, 40. Mat. 10. 14, 23. Acts 13. 50, 51. 18, 6.

§. 21. But

Whether the power of Teaching does indirectly imply any Command.

§. 21. But it may perhaps be objected, That the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, might at leaſt by indirect ways and means, exerciſe an Authority over Chriſtians, *viz.* by denying them the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which ſhews Men the way to Salvation, unleſs they would in other Matters alſo ſubmit themſelves to their Authority. For, who would not rather ſubmit to any thing than to be deprived of that Doctrine, which leads us to Heaven, and frees us from eternal Puniſhment? But it cannot in the leaſt be ſuppoſed, that ſuch Extortions could ever enter into the Apoſtles Thoughts, who joyfully gave for nothing, what they had received for nothing, and judged it a heinous Offence in *Simon*, who pretended to make a Trade of the Goſpel. St. *Paul* ſays: *Though I preach the Goſpel, I have nothing to glory of, for Neceſſity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the Goſpel.* Neither do I ſee, which way they could have made their market by the Goſpel. For, what is not underſtood, is not valued; if therefore they would raiſe in the People a deſire to the Goſpel, it muſt of neceſſity be firſt taught them. Neither is there any Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the ſame Men, who rather would looſe their Lives than neglect their Divine Commiſſion, ſhould be guilty of ſo hainous a Crime. And the Doctrine of the Goſpel, being now a-days ſufficiently ſpread abroad, it would be in vain for the Clergy of one Province or Commonwealth, to deny the Doctrine of the Goſpel to its Inhabitants, in caſe they would not comply with their Demands; ſince, if they ſhould perſiſt

1 Cor. 9. 16.

in

in their Folly, there would not be wanting ſuch as would ſupply their Places without reluctancy. Neither did Chriſt abſolutely commit his Doctrine to the ſole Management of the Prieſts, in ſuch a manner, as by Tradition to be tranſplanted from one to another; but, he ordered it to be put in Writing, not to be kept cloſe up by any one certain Colledge or Society, who were inveſted with a particular Prerogative to look into it, like it was at *Rome*, with the *Sybilline* Oracles; and granted a general Priviledge for every Body to peruſe it, and to inſtruct themſelves in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and in ſuch other Points as belonged to the Miniſtry of the Goſpel. But if a foreign Prieſt ſhould attempt to forbid the exerciſe of Religious Worſhip in another Commonwealth, ſcarce any body, unleſs quite prepoſſed with Superſtition, would make the leaſt account of it. The *Venetian* Commonwealth has given us a notable inſtance of this Nature in our Age; For, tho' the *Venetians* are *Roman Catholicks*, nevertheleſs did they oblige their Prieſts to exerciſe the Miniſterial Function, in ſpite of the Pope's Commands to the contrary.

Whether the power of Abſolution imply's any right to a Sovereignty?

§. 22. It ſeems to be a Matter of the greateſt Conſequence, and therefore the more to be taken notice of, when it is ſaid: That our Saviour *did give the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to St. Peter*, and the reſt of his Apoſtles; ſo, that, *whatſoever they ſhould bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever they ſhould looſen on Earth, ſhall be looſened in Heaven.* The whole Matter, duely examined, appears to be of the higheſt moment, *viz.* to have

Mat. 16. 19. S. Joh. 20. 23.

the

the Power of excluding Sinners from the Kingdom of Heaven, and of admiting ſuch as are freed by their Abſolution; For what is it, that may not be obtained from a Sinner in this caſe, eſpecially if the Prieſt refuſe him Abſolution, unleſs he promiſes a blind Obedience to his Demands? It ought therefore to be taken into ſerious conſideration, what is the true meaning of this Metaphorical Locution, *viz.* The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; ſince the ſame admits of divers Explications in the holy Scripture. In the *Rev.* 1. 18. the Son of God ſays of himſelf, That *he has the Keys of Hell and of Death*, which is explained by ſome, that he has the Power of inflicting Puniſhment, as if he would ſay: *I have power to deſtroy both Soul and Body in Hell*; as it is expreſſed in St. *Matthew* 10. 28. Tho' by this alſo might be underſtood, the power of delivering from Death and Hell, and to deſtroy the force of Death and Hell.

What is to be underſtood by the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Luk. 11. 52

It is alſo ſpoke of the *Scribes*, That *they have the Key of Knowledge*, which is by ſome applied to their Function of Teaching Wiſdom to others. Tho' this may alſo be underſtood from the holy Scripture it ſelf, the true Spring of Knowledge and Wiſdom, the Interpretation of which did in a moſt peculiar manner belong to their Function. In the Book of *Revelation*, the Son of God is ſaid

3. 7, 9. 1. 20. 1. *to have the Key of David, that he opened, and no Man ſhutteth, and ſhutted, and no man opened.*

v. 22. And in the 22th *Chapter* of *Iſaiah*, it is ſaid of *Eliakim*, the Son of *Hilkiah*; That *the Key of the Houſe of David ſhall be laid upon his Shoulder; ſo, that he ſhall open, and none*

ſhall

shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. Where the word, *Key*, cannot be taken for an absolute or despotick Power, but for a Ministerial Function; like to that of a Steward, such a one as St. *Paul* had professed himself, and his Fellow Apostles. Out of these several places, if duely compared, this general Assertion may be made, that, to have the Keys of a certain thing, is as much as to say, to have the means to attain, or to come to it. But how far these Means are at our disposal, and what use ought to be made of them, must be gathered out of other Circumstances. 1 Cor. 4. 1.

§. 23. Furthermore, it is to be considered, That the use of these Keys is appropriated to the binding and forgiving of Sins: For as soon as our Sins are taken away, (or which is the same in effect) if our Sins are forgiven, (other Means of Salvation being not neglected) the Kingdom of Heaven is open to us. But as long as the Sins remain upon us, and produce their pernicious Effects, the Kingdom of Heaven is shut up against us, nothing of unclean being to enter there. If therefore a true Judgment is to be given, of what share of Power the Apostles had in forgiving, and retaining of Sins, a due enquiry must be made, of what is to be understood, by forgiving and retaining of Sins? He, that does an unjust Act, commits an Offence both against the Legislator, whose Authority is thereby voilated, and against him, who is damnified by it. Besides this, there are some Offences of such a Nature, as to touch whole Societies, as far as their Reputation is thereby impair'd, the Crime committed *What is to understood by absolving from Sins.*

mitted by one of their Members, being oftentimes attributed to the whole Body. It is therefore from the Damage, which the Legislator, a single Person, or whole Society, receive by such an Offence, that an Action lies, against the Offender; In the same manner as a Creditor has a right to sue his Debtor for a Debt, contracted with him. In which respect it is, that Sins are often called Debts in the holy Scripture. But, in this double, or sometimes, threefold Action, which arises from one Offence committed against several Persons, each is to be considered as separate from the other; so, that, tho' one Action be taken off, the other remains notwithstanding this, in full force: For, as God does not remit Sins, without Satisfaction given from the Offender, to the offended Person; So, tho' the Offender be reconciled to the offended, nevertheless is he obliged to seek for Remission of his Sin by God; And, if the Offence be hainous, and of such a Nature, as to be scandalous to a whole Society, he ought there, also to endeavour his Reconcilation, by begging forgiveness of them. Therefore, to remit a Sin, is the same Thing, as to remit an Action, or to release one from an Action, which the offended Party had against the Offender. And he, that has an Action against another, by reason of some Offence committed against him, may properly be said, to have Power to remit that Offence or Sin, as far as his Action reaches. For, God himself does not make use of his uncontrouled Power of remitting of Sins; so, as without any further Respect, and by his mere

Mat. 5. 23. 24.

Pleasure

Pleasure to remit their Sins to some, and to punish others. For, to pardon Offences promiscuously, without any further regard but bare Pleasure, is in effect to render Laws ineffectual; and Laws are made to no purpose by him, who at the same time grants a License of Trespassing against them. And, because it was beyond all Human Power to give Satisfaction to God Almighty for our Offences, our Saviour Jesus Christ has made use of a most wonderful Moderation betwixt Justice and Mercy, in giving due Satisfaction in his own Person; So, that, whoever by the Faith appropriates the same to himself, thereby obtains Remission of his Sins from God. And, as to that part, which belongs to Men to forgive, God has commanded them not to be rigorous, if the Offender beg forgiveness, because every one of us must every day expect Forgiveness of his Sins from God Almighty; and we all commit sometimes Offences against our Neighbours, who, if they would all act rigorously with us, our Condition would be most deplorable. Wherefore we ought *to forgive our Debts, as we would have others forgive us their Debts.* Neither are we to be too rigorous against such Sinners, as have by their Offences proved scandalous to a whole Society, but if they seriously repent, we ought not to deny them our Pardon. It is also worth our further Observation, That the following Words; *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever you shall loosen on Earth, shall be loosened in Heaven,* are spoken by Christ also of the Remission of an

Mat. 6. 12, 14, 15. c. 5. 25, c. 18, 25. Luke 17. 3.

Mat. 18. 18.

Offence

Offence by the Party offended; Neither does the Senſe of the preceding Words allow to apply them only to his Diſciples, they being ſpoken not only to the Apoſtles, but to the Believers in general.

Under whoſe name and authority the Apoſtles did exerciſe this power of Abſolution.

§. 24. Suppoſing then that the Apoſtles were to remit ſuch Sins as were not committed againſt them, it muſt neceſſarily follow, That they, when they remitted Sins, did it either in the name of ſuch particular Perſons, againſt whom the ſaid Sins were committed, or in the name of a whole Society, or elſe in the name of ſome (Human or Divine) Legiſlator. Now it is certain, that no body can remit another Man's lawful Action, without his order or conſent, no more than you can lawfully take away another's Right or Property; and therefore it is abſolutely neceſſary, firſt, to make our peace with the Perſon offended; without which, we ought not to ſeek for Pardon from God Almighty; at leaſt, he, that has offended ought to take firſt, a firm Reſolution, to give Satisfaction, as far as is in his Power. Chriſt ſays; *Firſt, be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* And St. *Paul* offered to make Satisfaction to *Philemon*, for what Damage he had received from *Oneſimus*. From hence ariſes that general and common Rule: That *if Reſtitution be not made, there can be no Remiſſion of the Sin.* For, it is ridiculous, and a contradiction in it ſelf, to profeſs to God Almighty a true Repentance for an unjuſt Act, and at the ſame time enjoy the benefit of it. But, as for the Remiſſion of ſuch enormous Crimes as were committed againſt a whole Society, the

Mat. 5. 24. Luke 19. 8. v. 18, 19.

Apoſtles

Apoſtles had their ſhare in it, as is evident out of the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinth. c.* 5. 4, 5. and 2*Corinth. c.* 2. 10, *c.* 11. 29. and will be more treated of hereafter. It will be ſufficient in this place to take notice, that what Authority was exerciſed by them in this kind, was much inferior to that power which they had received of Retaining and Forgiving of Sins. But to remit Sins in the name of thoſe that had the Sovereign and Legiſlative Power in the State, did not belong to the Apoſtles, their Commiſſion and Power being not to interfer with the Civil Juriſdiction, or to diminiſh its Prerogatives; Wherefore Civil Magiſtrates juſtly may, and do puniſh, Offenders according to the Laws of the Realm, notwithſtanding they have made their peace with God. The only way then for the Apoſtles was, to forgive Sins in the Name of God, by whoſe Authority they had received their Commiſſion, as is evident out of theſe Words: *Whatſoever you ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever you ſhall looſen on Earth, ſhall be looſened in Heaven.*

§. 25. But, if we propoſe to form to our ſelves a true Idea of the Power granted to the Apoſtles, when the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were given unto them, and how far it extends it ſelf, we muſt take into ſerious Conſideration, in what manner Chriſt himſelf did remit Sins, whilſt he lived among us upon Earth. This is ſufficiently manifeſt out of ſeveral Paſſages in St. *Matthew*, 9. 2. *Mark*, 2. 3. *Luke*, 5. 20. *c.* 7. 47, 48, 39, 50. where our Saviour verifies his Power of forgiving of

Of what nature this Power was

Sins, by a Miracle, which could not but be the effect of a Divine Power. Beſides this, there was no Plaintiff or Defendant, there was no open or expreſs Confeſſion of Sin; but as ſoon as Chriſt ſaw their Faith, he pronounced Remiſſion of Sin. And, if we peruſe the whole New Teſtament, it will moſt evidently appear, that neither Chriſt nor his Apoſtles did forgive Sins in a judicial way, where Crimes are firſt examined; but where the Faith was, the forgiveneſs of Sins was the immediate conſequence of it. *He that believed on him*, ſays St. *John*, *is not condemned, but he that believed not, is condemned already.* Neither is that Confeſſion (whether tacit or expreſs) which ought to precede the Remiſſion of Sins, like to thoſe Confeſſions, which in Judicial Courts are required to be made by Offenders, and are ſure to meet with deſerved Puniſhment; But it has a reſemblance to thoſe Confeſſions, that are made to Phyſicians, by ſuch of their Patients as labour under a ſecret Diſtemper, hoping thereby for Relief in their Diſeaſes. As it is expreſſed in the 32 *Pſalm*, *v.* 3, 4, 5. of *David*; Neither can true Repentance be ſuppoſed without ſuch a Confeſſion; for, how can we ask forgiveneſs either of God, or our Neighbour, whom we have offended, unleſs we confeſs and acknowledge our Error. Laſtly, it is to be obſerved, That Chriſt and his Apoſtles, during the time of Grace, here upon Earth, did not intend to ſet up a judicial Court, but to preach, and to announce repentance and forgiveneſs of Sins. But of the great Day of Judgment, it is ſaid, That God will proceed to

Chap. 3. v. 18.

Joſ. 7. 19. c. 20. 21.

Prov. 28. 13.

Judgment

Judgment in a ſolemn manner, there, *the Supream Judge will ſit upon the Throne of Judgment, there Seats are to be prepared for the Aſſeſſours, the Books are to be opened, and every one is to be judged according to his Works*; and that without Appeal: It ought alſo to be taken notice of, That, tho' we have obtained pardon for an Offence from our Neighbour, this does not always and neceſſarily imply a Pardon from God Almighty; for it, is poſſible, that, notwithſtanding a Pardon obtained from Men, God has not abſolved us from that Offence; as for inſtance, if the Offender be without true Faith, or an Hypocrite: And, on the other hand, it is poſſible that our Offences are forgiven by God, when forgiveneſs has been denied us by Men; as in caſe, our Neighbour refuſes to pardon an Offence, tho' we beg Forgiveneſs, and profer Satisfaction to be made; or, a Prieſt, being overcome by private Paſſion, ſhould deny us Abſolution; When therefore the Prieſt ſays; *Thy Sins are forgiven unto thee*, it is not always to be taken for granted, that Chriſt does then make uſe of the ſame Words; For, God alone is the Judge of our Faith, and even our Thoughts; But Men can only give their Judgment according to ſuch Circumſtances, or outward Signs, as effect our Senſes, which often prove deceitful, and far different from what we keep concealed within us. And, tho' in Civil Courts of Judicature it is ſufficient, if Judgment be given in a Caſe, according to what is proved by Evidence, notwithſtanding the ſame may be contrary to Truth; it is quite otherwiſe with God Almighty, who, ſearch- Rev. 20. 12.

ſearching into the very bottom of our Hearts, cannot be deceived by Hypocriſie. And, tho' the Prieſt ſhould tell thee a hundred times over and over, thy Sins are forgiven uuto the, and thou art deſtitute of Faith, it can avail thee nothing. Laſtly, it ought not to be forgotten, that, when God did give unto the Apoſtles the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, he did not thereby ſurrender all his Power of forgiving Sins, or of receiving penitent Sinners into his Favour; or did debar himſelf from making uſe of this Power, unleſs by the means of Prieſts, ſo as to reſerve only to himſelf the Supream Prerogative of remitting of Sins, in caſe of an unjuſt refuſal of the Prieſt; No, by no means; for if this were granted, it would be in vain for us to pray every day; *Forgive us our Sins.* All theſe things duely conſidered, are evident Proofs, that, when it is ſaid, that the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were given unto the Apoſtles, it is to be underſtood from the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which treats of the remiſſion of Sins through our Faith in Chriſt; when the Apoſtles taught this Doctrine to the Believers, it was ſaid of them, that they forgave Sins, in the ſame ſenſe as they are ſaid to ſave others by Preaching the Goſpel to the Believers. And on the contrary, when they preach the Goſpel to the Unbelieving, they are ſaid to have bound them, ſo, as that they ſhall be bound in Heaven. The Apoſtles therefore, when they announced to the Believing the Grace of God and Forgiveneſs of Sins through Chriſt, did open the Gates of Heaven; and they ſhut them againſt ſuch, as,

1 Tim. 4. 16.

Joh. 3. 18.

being

being unbelieving, refuſed to accept this Doctrine. So, that, when a Miniſter of the Church applies this Doctrine of the Goſpel to one particular Perſon, he ſays thus much to him: *If thou believeſt according to thy Confeſſion, I announce and confirm unto thee Remiſſion of thy Sins, through the Merits of Chriſt; ſo, that thou mayeſt be now aſſured, that the ſame are forgiven by Chriſt in Heaven: But if thou not believeſt, thy Sins are not forgiven.* For, remiſſion of Sins is the neeeſſary conſequence of Faith, even before the Abſolution is pronounced by the Prieſt; it being not left to the arbitrary Pleaſure of Men, whether to apply the gracious Doctrine of Remiſſion of Sins to a believing Perſon, or not; But, he that believes, is thereby juſtified before God, notwithſtanding he be prevented from receiving Abſolution from the Prieſt. Out of what has been ſaid, it is evident, that, according to the Intention of our Saviour, theſe Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were not to be made uſe of for the Eſtabliſhment of a Temporal State, or to gain other Temporal Advantages. For, Chriſt ordered the Apoſtles to preach Remiſſion of Sins, and give for nothing, what they had received for nothing; but not to traffick with the Word of God. Neither did they, by preaching the Goſpel, make Men ſubject to themſelves, but to Chriſt; Nay, St. *Paul*, could not underſtand without Indignation, that ſome among the *Corinthians* would be called from him, ſome from *Apollo*, &c. 1 Cor. 1. 12, 13.

§. 26. But of what nature ſoever their Power or Function might be, the ſame was granted

Whether St. Peter had any Prerogative granted him before the reſt of the Apoſtles?

in an equal degree to all the Apoſtles, ſo, that none of them could claim a particular Prerogative, or, at leaſt not any right of Commanding the reſt. For, if we peruſe thoſe ſeveral Paſſages in the holy Scripture, where the Apoſtolical Function was eſtabliſhed, and conferred upon them, there are not the leaſt footſteps of Inequality to be found among them. And that Paſſage *St. Luke* 22. 26, 27. Epiſtle to the *Galat.* 2. 9, 14. By *St. Matth.* 16. 18. which the *Romaniſts* make ſuch a ſtir about, contains nothing, that can give any legal Pretence Superiority to St. *Peter*, and much leſs to the *Roman* Biſhops over all the Chriſtian Churches. St. *Peter* had in the abovementioned place made his Confeſſion, That *Jeſus was the Son of the living God.* This excellent Confeſſion did deſerve a ſuitable anſwer from Chriſt, who ſaid, thou art *Peter*, as if he would ſay, perſiſt in this thy Confeſſion *Peter*; which does in no wiſe imply, that *Peter* ſhould thereby have deſerved thoſe Prerogatives over the other Apoſtles, as the *Romaniſts* do pretend to. For, St. *Peter* did not make this Confeſſion for himſelf only, but in the Name of all thoſe, unto whom Chriſt ſpoke at that time. In the ſame manner as he ſpoke in the Name of the reſt of the Diſciples by St. *John* 6.69. *We believe, and are ſure, that thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God.* Neither was *Peter* the firſt, that made this Confeſſion; For, before him the ſame had been made by *John* the Baptiſt, by St. *Andrew*, *Philip* and *Nathanael.* And it is no difficult Task to prove out of ſeveral paſſages of the holy Scripture, that none could be taken for a true

Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. c. 23. 8. S. Joh. 20. 21, 22, 23. c. 13. 14, 15, 16.

Joh. 1. 34, 36, 42, 45, 49. Mat. 10. 32, 33. John 11 27. Acts 4. 12.

Diſciple

Disciple of Christ, unless he had made this Confession; And our Saviour, to shew, of what consequence this Confession was, added these Words: *Upon this Rock I will build my Church*: Which is as much as to say, this Doctrine, that Jesus is the Son of God, is the main Foundation Stone, whereupon is to be built the mystical Edifice of the Christian Church. So, that no further inference can be made from these Words, than what is expressed to the same purpose by St. *John*, 20. 31. and in the 1 Epist. of *John*, 2. 22. *c.* 3. 20. *c.* 4 2. *viz.* That the fundamental Article of the Christian Religion is: *That Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messias, and the Son of the living God.* c. 8. 37. c. 9. 20, 22.

§. 27. It also is worth our Consideration, whether the Power of Excommunication, which was used by the Apostles, and in the Primitive Church, implies any Sovereign Authority, such as ought to be exercised in a State? Unto this we answer in the Negative; provided the same be taken according to the proper Use and End of its genuine and primitive Institution. For, that this Power may with conveniency enough, be made use of, (if misapplied) to serve an ambitious Design, and to keep the poor People in awe, is sufficiently proved by Experience. It seems to me, that there was a remarkable Difference betwixt the Excommunication of the Jews, by virtue of which they were excluded from their Synagogues, and the Excommunication used among the Primitive Christians. For, among the Jews, where the Sovereigns and the People professed one and the same Religion (which- *Whether the Power of Excommunication implies any Sovereign Right or Jurisdiction.*

alſo was entirely united with the State) it might eaſily happen, that the Excluſion from the Synagogue, did carry along with it ſeveral Inconveniencies in Civil Affairs, and might therefore not unjuſtly be conſidered at the ſame time, as a Civil Puniſhment; which, rendered the Offenders infamous in the Commonwealth; Eſpecially, ſince, according to the Fundamental Conſtitution of that Government, there were ſeveral things belonging to Religion puniſhable by their civil Conſtitutions. But, it being already put beyond Queſtion, that neither our Saviour, nor his Apoſtles, did ever pretend to any Civil Power; and that beſides this, the Primitive Chriſtians lived under the Juriſdiction of other Princes, how could their Excommunication, Ban, or what other ſort of Eccleſiaſtical Cenſure was uſed among them, be ſuppoſed to have any influence upon the Civil State and Condition of the Chriſtians; or to have been of the ſame nature and force (properly ſpeaking) as Civil Puniſhments are? This will more plainly appear, if we examine thoſe Paſſages, where this Matter is compleatly treated of in the New Teſtament: It is ſaid in *Matthew* 18. 15,16,17. *If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go, and tell him his Fault, between thee and him alone; If he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother. But, if he will not hear thee, then take with thee One or Two more, that in the mouth of two or three Witneſſes every Word may be eſtabliſhed. And if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church, but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen Man and a Publican.* Certainly out of this paſſage, nothing

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can be inferr'd that has any relation to a Temporal Jurisdiction or Sovereignty; but barely shews us, how differences ought to be composed among Christians. So St. *Paul* ordains, that we shall rather leave Differences to the Arbitration of a Brother, or rather take wrong, than to go to Law with a Brother before the Unbelievers, to the great shame of the Christian Name. So, that, tho' it is else required from the Offender to beg the Pardon of, and offer Satisfaction to the Person offended; nevertheless, if he neglect his Duty in this Point, Christ commanded, that the offended Party shall first offer a Reconciliation, and try before he brings his Action against the Offender, whether Satisfaction for the Injury received, and a Reconciliation may not be obtained by a private Arbitration. If this prove fruitless, he says, he ought to take along with him two or three Witnesses, to try whether they can prevail with his Adversary to bring him to a more pliable Temper; and at the same time, may testifie, That the offended Party, did offer every thing which might tend towards a Reconciliation betwixt them; But, if after all this, he remain obstinate, the Difference ought to be referr'd to the whole Congregation of the Believers, residing in that Place; (for I see no reason why by the word *Ecclesia* or Church, the *Presbyters* only should be understood.) But, if they also cannot prevail with their Authority over his Stubbornes, let him then be unto thee like a Heathen man and Publican, unto whom his Trespasses will not be remitted, because he refuses to acknowledge

1 Cor. 6. 1, 2.

Vid. Mat. 5. 40.

his

his Offence, or to give Satisfaction for it; which is as much as to say, fly his Conversation, like that of a vile Person; which every one may freely do, without being thereunto compelled by any Superior Power. For, that the Jews did not converse with the Heathens and Publicans, except in Civil Affairs, is of no great force against us, it being certain, that the Heathens and Publicans were not so infamous in themselves by any Civil Constitution, the Jews being at that time subject to the Heathens, who matter'd not their Conversation. Besides this, it is left to every ones free Choice, whom he will admit into his familiar Conversation; and always was a certain Rule among the wiser Sort, not to be familiar with People of a perverted Humour, and an ill Life, whose Conversation every body may avoid, as he finds it most convenient. So, the Apostle bids us, to reject a Man that is a Heretick,
Tit. 3. 10. after the first and second Admonition, lest we
Thes. 2. 14. should be infected with his false Doctrine, for
2 Pet. 2. 1. 2 Gal. 1. 8, 9. which he is to expect due Punishment from God Almighty. Neither does that passage, in the 1 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, 5. 1. and following Verses, and in the 2 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, 13. 2, 10. where St. *Paul* declares, that according to the Power given him, he intends to deliver the incestuous Person to Satan, (take it in what sense you please) involve any Civil Jurisdiction or Command; no more, than those in the 1 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, 6. 9. *seq.* in the 1 *Timothy*, 1. 20. in the 2 Epist. of *John*, 5. 10. All which passages signifie no more, than that every body may freely decline

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the Converſation of ſuch People, as he thinks may be reproach, or hurtful to him, without implying a prejudice to their Reputation in Civil Affairs. So, that, by avoiding the Converſation of ill Livers, we are not obliged to retire from the World; that is, we need not be ſo ſcrupulous in avoiding ſuch Converſation, as to neglect our Duty, or other neceſſary Buſineſs appertaining to Civil Society. And in this ſenſe it is appliable as well to Chriſtians, as to Pagans, of an ill Converſation.

The Commiſſion of the Apoſtles contains nothing reſembling any Sovereign Power.

§. 28. Laſtly, if we caſt our eyes upon thoſe Inſtructions, which Chriſt gave to his Apoſtles and Diſciples, it will evidently appear, that their Commiſſion had not the leaſt relation to the Eſtabliſhment of a Sovereign State. A State cannot be without a Supream Head, who having Power to beſtow Honours and Dignities, this generally proves the occaſion of ambitious Deſigns. A State cannot be maintained without conſiderable Revenues, which entices Men to Avarice. But, if we look upon our Saviour, we ſhall find that his main Endeavour is to keep his Diſciples from ambitious Deſigns and Covetouſneſs. The Inſtruction given by Chriſt to his Diſciples in S. *Matthew* 10. when, after having endowed them with the Gift of Miracles, he ſent them, as it was, to make their firſt Tryal, among the Jews, deſerves particularly here to be taken notice of; tho' it is not to be queſtioned, but that the ſame Inſtruction remained in force for the moſt part, after they were ſent among the Gentiles. The firſt Precept in this Inſtruc-

Mat. 18. 1, 2, 3, 4. c. 23 8. Mark 9. 33. Luke 9. 46. Joh. 13. 13, 14, 15, 16.

on

on is, That they ſhall take heed not to abuſe the Chriſtian Doctrine, and the Gift of Miracles for the heaping up of Gold and Silver, which are otherwiſe accounted the Sinews of a State. As you have received it for nothing, ſo you ſhall give it for nothing, is the Command, which was very well obſerved by *St.*
Act. 3. 6. *Peter*, when he ſaid, *Silver and Gold have I none.* And, leſt they ſhould, under pretence of Subſiſtance and acquiring Neceſſaries, be enticed to Avarice, Chriſt forbid them, even to provide two Coats, Shoes, Staves, or a Purſe; but that they ſhould be contented with what they received from their Auditors. It is not to be denied, but that this Command may chiefly be applied to ſuch Journeys, as were not to be too long, or in far diſtant Countries; But on the other hand it ought to be taken into conſideration, that the Allowances, to be given to thoſe that preached the Goſpel, are compared to the Wages of Workmen, which ſeldom amount to any more, than is neceſſary for Subſiſtance; or, at the moſt, cannot exceed a private Fortune, having not the leaſt compariſon with thoſe vaſt Revenues, which are required to maintain a State. As may be ſeen in *Mat.* 10. 10. *Luk.* 10. 7. 1 *Cor:* 9. 11. And the paſſage in the 1 Epiſt. to *Timothy* 5. 18. chiefly relates to the Prieſthood, where it is expreſly forbidden not to make a Trade of their Office, and to fly Avarice, as the root of all Evil; and conſequently of all thoſe Abuſes and Superſtitions, which have overwhelmed the Church of *Rome*, And, that by their Number they might not appear terrible, Chriſt only

only ſends them two and two, with this expreſs Command, not to force their Doctrine upon any Body, but to ſeek for reception by a kind Salute, and, if they find them inclined to receive their Doctrine, to abide there, but to leave thoſe, whom they found unworthy, and not ready to hear their Words, and even to ſhake off the Duſt of their Feet. After theſe Inſtructions given, Chriſt foretels them what Perſecutions and Dangers they muſt undergo, all which, he will have them to overcome, not by Force, but by Patience, by ſhewing their Innocence, or flying to another Place. The quite contrary is practiſed in Temporal Governments, whoſe Founders lay this down for a ſure Maxim of State, *Tu contra audentior ito. Never ſhrink before your Enemy.* After the Aſcenſion of our Saviour, they diſperſed into all Parts of the World, according as they were inſpired, without having appointed any certain place of Reſidence for their Government, from whence they might receive their Inſtructions or Commiſſions, and where they were to be accountable concerning their Negotiation, or where to fix the Center of their Correſpondency; at leaſt, thus much is certain, that nothing like it is recorded in the holy Scripture. Neither was it in their Power to have acquired any great Territories, it being obvious, that they lived always under another Juriſdiction, and in ſuch Places, where the Government was already Eſtabliſhed. Nor had they any Authority to exact upon their Auditors, except what they were pleaſed to allot them by voluntary Contribution; For, if they ſhould

Mark 6. 7.

Mat. 5. 10, 11.

have

have attempted any thing beyond it, no doubt but thoſe Magiſtrates, under whoſe Juriſdiction they lived, might legally have ſtopt their Proceedings, as done in prejudice of their Authority. For, in caſe the generality, or the greateſt part of the Chriſtians ſhould have attempted to follow the Example of ſome of their Brethren at *Jeruſalem*, who were for having all things in Common, it had been lawful for their Sovereigns to put a ſtop to their inconſiderate Deſign, which needs muſt have tended to the great detriment of the Commonwealth. Laſtly, the Apoſtles did not oblige their Auditors to leave their antient Habitations, like *Moſes* led the *Iſraelites* out of *Ægypt*, but left them in quiet Poſſeſſion of their former Station and honeſt Functions, not pretending to any Innovation, but that they ſhould receive the Chriſtian Religion.

Acts 2. 44, 45. c. 4. 5.

The Kingdom of Chriſt implies no Temporal Sovereignty

§. 29. It is furthermore to be conſicered; whether the Doctrine of Chriſt, which unites our Hearts under the Obedience of Chriſt by the Faith, does not, by vertue of this Union, conſtitute a certain Sovereignty reſembling the Sovereign Power of our Civil Governments? To this we anſwer in the Negative; as it may plainly appear, to thoſe, that will duely conſider the Nature and Qualifications, which are in the holy Scripture attributed to the Kingdom of Chriſt, and the Kingdom of Heaven here upon Earth. It is without queſtion, that the Union of the Believers under Chriſt, their King, ought to be conſidered as a Kingdom or Empire, but ſuch a one as is not of this World, and conſequently of a quite different

different nature from that Sovereign Power, which is exercised in a Civil Government. Christ is there the King, who having withdrawn himself from our sight, has as it may be said, settled his Court in Heaven. His subjects are dispersed throughout all parts of the World, where the Christian Doctrine is taught and received by the Believers, who, by the intrinsick, Vertue of this Doctrine, are confirmed in their Faith, and made proof against all the Temptations and Malice of this World. The Civil Power does not reach this Kingdom; true Piety being not to be implanted by Human Force, which is insufficient to procure God's Grace, or raise those inward Motions which are chiefly acceptable to God Almighty; and without which, all our exterior Actions, that may be enforced by a Civil Authority, are to be deem'd vain and fruitless. For, the Kingdom of Christ being a Kingdom of Truth, it requires no Civil Power or Force; For, Truth, by the help of the Christian Doctrine, and with the assistance of God's Grace, does gently insinuate it self into the Hearts of Men, and the Rewards or Punishments, which those are to receive, that either accept or despise this Doctrine, are reserved for the Life to come. He that will be pleased to examine those several Passages, where mention is made of the Kingdom of Christ, or the Kingdom of Heaven, may soon be convinced, that not any thing is to be met withal there, which has the least resemblance to a Civil Power or Sovereignty. Those that expect to enter into this Kingdom, must qualifie themselves by Repentance.

Mat. 3. 2.
c. 4. 17.
c. 4. 23.
It c. 9. 35.

Mat. 5. 1. seq. It is ſpoke of Chriſt himſelf, that he went about preaching the Goſpel of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Virtues and Qualifications which Chriſt requires in thoſe, that will enter into his Kingdom, and conſequently be bleſſed with eternal Salvation, have but little relation to the Qualifications of a Subject in a Civil Government. In that Kingdom every one is called great, or the leaſt, according to his Proficiency in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and according to his Obedience or diſobedience to it. We are commanded *firſt to ſeek the Righteouſneſs of this Kingdom.* The great Myſtery of this Kingdom is *the powerful operation of the Word of God.* In this Kingdom are not only ſuffered thoſe that are Foreigners to it, but alſo its Enemies, which is againſt the Maxims, of a Civil Government. The Keys of this Kingdom are contained in the Doctrine of Remiſſion of Sins. And what is taught us concerning Precedency in the Kingdom of Heaven, is quite contrary to what is practiſed in a Civil *State.* It is allowable by the Civil Conſtitutions, for every one to purſue his Right, but, in the Kingdom of Chriſt, he is counted an ill Subject, who will not remit a Treſpaſs to his Brother. The Kingdom of Chrift is alſo of the little Children. Thoſe that are employed in this Kingdom have different Tasks, and undergo different ſorts of Hardſhip, and yet their Reward is the ſame. This Kingdom is taken from thoſe that refuſe it; whereas it is a Maxim of Temporal Sovereigns, to force ſuch as are refractory to Obedience; aud this was the reaſon, why, after the Jews had deſpiſed it,

Mat. 5. 19. c. 7. 21. c. 6. 33. c. 13. 21. 33. 44, 45, 52.

c. 24 47.

Mat. 16. 19.

Mat. 18. 1. c. 20. 21. c. 23. 8. Mark 9. 33, 34. c. 10. 42.

Mat. 18. 23. c. 21. 14. Mark 10. 14.

Mat. 20. 1. c. 21. 23

c. 22. 2.

it, it was offered to the Gentiles. He that will enjoy the Benefit of this Kingdom muſt not be ſloathful. The richeſt find always the eaſieſt Reception in a Civil State, but *the rich Man ſhall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Chriſt.* He is accounted a good Subject in a State, who is induſtrious, and gathers Riches by all lawful ways and means; but this is reckoned as ſuperfluous in the Kingdom of Heaven. One of the chiefeſt Motives which induced Mankind to enter into Civil Societies, was, to preſerve themſelves and their Poſſeſſions; But Chriſt ſays: *Whoever he be of you, that forſaked not all that he hath, he cannot be my Diſciple.* And laſtly of all, he ſays: *The Kingdom of God cometh not with obſervation; neither ſhall they ſay, lo here, or lo there, for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.* It would be ſuperfluous to alledge more for the proof of it, all the reſt being moſt of them the ſame in Subſtance.

c. 25. 1. Mat. 19. 23. Mark 10. 23. Luke 12, 32. Luk. 14. 33. c. 17. 21.

§. 30. Though it be evident that, the Union of the Believers under Chriſt their King, and that Myſtical Body, whoſe Head is Chriſt, the Members of all the Believers in general, cannot be conſidered as a Temporal State; nevertheleſs, it is worth our enquiry, whether not all thoſe in General, that profeſs the Chriſtian Doctrine may be conſidered as a Body belonging under one Civil Government, or at leaſt, have a near reſemblance to a Civil Commonwealth? Or, which is the ſame in effect, Whether the Church, according to our Saviour's Intention ought to be conſidered as a State or Commonwealth? We take here the Word State, in its common Acceptation, *viz.* for a

Whether the Church be a State?

certain Society of Men, which being independent from any Foreign Jurisdiction, live under the Protection of their own Sovereigns. The main intention of this Question is, that, after we shall have made it appear, That the Church, according to the intention of Christ and his Apostles, neither was, nor could be a State, it may from thence be concluded, whether that Church which pretends to a Sovereignty, considered as such, be Christ's Church? But, to trace the very original of this Question, it ought first of all to be considered, in what Sense the Word *Ecclesia* or Church, is taken in the holy Scripture. The word *Ecclesia* has its off-spring out of the Democracy's of the *Greeks*, whereby they understood a Convention, Meeting, or sometimes, a Concourse of the People, or of a considerable Part of their Citizens, in order to receive Propositions, to consult and make Decrees, concerning Matters belonging to the Commonwealth. It is derived of *Evocare*, or to Call-forth, not, that thereby was always understood an Assembly, summoned out of a greater Multitude, (for I can see no reason why not all the Citizens had a Right to appear in those Assemblies;) but, because they were called out of their private Dwelling-places,, and from their ordinary Business, to meet in a publick Place. So, that the original Signification of the Word, *Ecclesia*, implies not that of a State, but only a certain Qualification of a Democratical Government; it being evident, that a great number of Men cannot conveniently give their assent to a thing, unless they be Convened in one

What is understood in the holy Scripture by the word Ecclesia?

one Place. In the Tranſlation the *LXX* Interpreters, this Word is taken for a Convention, ot Meeting of a conſiderable number of People; met, not only for the exerciſe of Divine Worſhip, but alſo for unlawful Ends. So the *Greek* word Εκκλησιάξειν, is taken for the Calling and Summoning an Aſſembly, about Matters concerning the Commonwealth. But in the New Teſtament, the word *Eccleſia*, is, generally, taken, either, for all the Chriſtians in General, wherever diſperſed, or for the Congregation of the Believers in a certain Country, City, private Houſe, or Family. In either ſenſe, if we duely weigh the Attributes and Actions properly belonging to the Church (for by theſe we ought to judge of the Nature of a thing in Moral Caſes) we do not meet with any thing, which has a relation to a Civil State. The true Encomium moſt frequently given to the Members of the Church is; that they are *Brothers, holy, and redeemed by the Blood of Chriſt*. Their chief Actions are ſaid to be, *to hear the Word of God, to pray unto and praiſe God, to be Charitable, to walk in the fear of God, to Faſt, and to provide for the Poor.* It is ſpoken of St *Paul* and *Barnabas*, That they did Conſtitute Elders in thoſe Churches, which they had planted in *Aſia*, where the word χειροτονήσαντες, is made uſe of, which implies as much, as having made them by Suffrages of the Congregation; in the ſame manner as the Decrees uſed to paſs in the antient Democracies, by the plurality of Votes; by which it appears, that they pretended to no Abſolute Power of Conſtituting Elders o-

Pſ. 26 5. Luk 23. 3, 4. c. 38. 24. Acts 19. 32 39. Num. 20. 8, 10 Joſ. 16, 1, 2. 2 Chron. 15. 9. c. 34, 29.

What actions are celebrated in Scripture as belonging to the Church.

Act, 1. 4. 23.

over them, but such as were approved of by the Congregation. And it is remarkable that these, nevertheless are said to have been made *Overseers over the Church by the Holy Ghost*. So were the Judges, that were set in the Land by *Jehosaphat*, *stiled Judges for the Lord*; because, whoever is fitly qualified for any Office or Function, not contrary to the Word of God, and has obtained the same by lawful ways and Means, may justly be said to have been Constituted in that same Office by God Almighty. And though it belongs most properly to the Church to constitute Teachers, this nevertheless does not imply any Act of Sovereignty; it being evident, that a private Colledge or Society, subject to another Jurisdiction, may lawfully enjoy the same Power. A Dissension being arosen concerning an Article of Faith in the Church of *Antiocha*, they determined, that some of them should go concerning this Question then in dispute, to the Church of *Jerusalem*; And these Deputies were by the rest of the Brethren, conducted out of the Town, in their way to *Jerusalem*; where this Question having been debated, and determined, they sent Word thus, to their Brethren, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and us*, &c. where it is to be observed, that to send Deputies, concerning such Matters, as are not intended in prejudice of the Sovereign Power; for one Congregation to consult another, concerning any Articles of Faith; and to determine any Differences about them, are to be looked upon, as Actions of such a nature, which do not imply a Sovereign and Absolute Power;

Act. 20. e 8.

2 Chron. 19. 5.

Act. 15. 2,

Power; but may legally belong to a private Colledge, or ſometimes a private Perſon; provided the Buſineſs in hand be not impoſed upon its Members, but tranſacted and admitted by common conſent. So the Church of *Jeruſalem*, choſe certain Men, who were to be Overſeers of the Poor, which they had a Right to do, as being a Society or Colledge. In the ſame Senſe ought to be taken, what is ſaid in the 2 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 8. 19. That the Churches had choſen one to travel with St. *Paul*. The Church is called *a Flock*, *which is to be fed by the Biſhops, with the pure Word of God, who are to preſerve it from the Wolves*; That is to ſay, from *Men ſpeaking perverſe things*, *to draw away Diſciples after them*; Againſt thoſe Teachers of the Church ought to be watchful, not ceaſing to Admoniſh their Auditors to avoid their Snares. What concerns that paſſage in the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 6. 1. and following *Verſes*, it is apparent enough, that there is not any Sovereign Authority or Juriſdiction granted to the Chriſtians, (barely conſidered as Chriſtians:) But the Apoſtle enjoyns them, that in caſe of any Differences in Civil Affairs among the Members of the Church, they ſhould rather refer it to the Arbitration of the Brethren, than to go to Law before the Gentiles, and fall under the Cenſure of being Avaricious. In the following Chapter, it is plainly expreſſed, that no body, by becoming a Member of the Church, does change his Qualification or Function, which belonged to him as a Subject; or that Chriſtianity is inconſiſtent with the Subjection to a Civil Government; a Servant

Acts 6. 1, 2.

Acts 20. 28.

therefore, by being a Christian, does not become a Freeman; neither is a Subject thereby absolved from the Allegiance due to his Sovereign; concerning the Union and Modesty, which ought to be practised in the Church, or the Christian Congregations, where the Word of God was Preached, and the Sacraments Administred, St. *Paul* speaks in the 1 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 11. 18. and following *Verses*; and in the 14 *Chap.* 34, 40 *Verse*. And, what sort of Religious Exercises was to be used in these Congregations, is expressed in the 1 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 14. *viz.* to be *Hymns*, *Doctrines*, *Tongues*, *Propheſies*, *Revelations*, *Interpretations*; all which are to be applied to Edifie the Congregation; and in the 12 *Chapter*, 28 *Verse*, the several Degrees and Functions of the Members of the Church, are thus enumerated: First, *Apostles*, secondarily, *Prophets*, thirdly, *Teachers*; after that, *Miracles*, then *Gifts of Healings*, *Helps*, *Governments*, *Diversities of Tongues*; All which are Requisites belonging to the propagating and establishing of the Gospel, and are Gifts of that self same Spirit, who dispenses his Gifts to every Man, as he pleases; So, that he, that has received more noble Endowments, can therefore not claim any Prerogative, as being a more honorable Member of this Mystical Body, or pretend to any Jurisdiction over such as are not endowed with these Qualifications in the same Degree as himself. And charity, which is the inseparable Attribute of all Christians, is more noble and excellent than all other spiritual Gifts. Alms are the only Taxes which be-

Ep. Rom. 13. 1. 2 Tim. 5. 8, 14 c. 6. 1, 2. *Vid* Eph. 4. 2. Eph. 4. 11 1 Cor. 16. 1. 2 Cor. 8. 2, 3, 8.

long

long to the Church, and these also cannot be exacted by the Sovereign Authority of the Church; 1 Tim. 5: 16.

Tho' it be undeniable, that every Church is obliged to maintain its Ministers. In the 2 Epist. to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 11. 28. St. *Paul* professes, That *the Care of all the Churches lies upon him*, *to strengthen those that were weak, and to obviate Scandals.* And in the next following *Chapter*, he says, That the Church of *Corinth* is In no wise inferior to other Churches, which were planted by others, who had exercised the Apostolical Function before him. Neither is any thing to be met withal in the Holy Scripture, which proves the Subordination of one Church to another; Nay, the Congregations of small Towns, and even of private Families, are often stiled Churches, as those of vast Cities; and those particular Churches, which were planted in *Judea*, are called the Churches of God. In the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, *c.* 1. 22. *c.* 5. 23. and to the *Colossians*, *c.* 1 18, 24. Christ is called the *Head of the Body of the Church, which he has presented to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be Holy and without Blemish, sanctified by Christ's Redemption, and cleansed with the washing of Water, by the Word.* 1 Phil. 4. 15. 2 Cor. 9. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 18. 1 Thes. 2. 14. 2 Thes. 1. 4. Ephes. 5. 26, 27.

What Qualifications are required in a Bishop, or a Governour of a particular Church, is expressed in the 1 Epistle to *Timothy*, *c.* 3. 2. and following *Verses*; in the 2 Epistle to *Timothy*, 6. 4. 2. in the Epistle to *Titus*, *c.* 1. 2, 8, 9, and *c.* 2. 7. All which, if duely examined, have a relation meerly to the Purity of his Doctrine, and his being blameless in his Behaviour; and

do not in the leaſt ſavour of any thing properly belonging to the Supream Governours of a State. For, it is ſaid, that he muſt be *the Huſband of one Wife, Vigilant, Sober, of a good Behaviour, given to Hoſpitality, apt to Teach; Not given to Wine, no Striker, not greedy of Filthy Lucre; but patient, not a Bawler, not Covetous. One that ruled well his own Houſe, having his Children in Subjection, with all Gravity; Not a Novice, not lifted up with Pride*; All which are ſuch Vertues as belong properly to a Teacher, or a private Perſon, In the 1 Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *c.* 3. 15. the Church is called, *the Houſe of God*; στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα, or, *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*; like we are uſed to affix Proclamations to great Pillars, to the view of every body. Tho' ſome antient Manuſcripts refer theſe words; *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*, to the following Sentence; the Preceding ending with the words, *The Church of the living God.* Then begins a new Sentence thus: *The pillar and ground of Truth, and without Controverſy, great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs. God was manifeſt in the Fleſh*, &c. So, that, in this ſenſe, this Paſſage is parallel to what Chriſt told St. *Peter* by St. *Matthew*, *c.* 16. 18. and to that of St. *John*, *c.* 20. 31. The Titles of Honour belonging to the Chriſtian Church, are recited in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, *c.* 12. 22. where it is called, *The mount of Sion, the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, the innumerable Company of Angels; the General Aſſembly and Church of the firſt Born, which are written in Heaven, where God is the Judge of all, and Jeſus the Mediator of the New*

Cove-

Covenant, and the Sperit of just Men made perfect. And in the *Revelation*, c. 2. 3. the Churches of *Asia* are praised for their good Deeds, and their Vices exposed, with a severe Commination, that, if they did not repent, their Candlestick (which is the Doctrine of the Gospel) should be taken away from them; which is sufficient to shew, that the Light of the Gospel may be extinguished in particular *Churches*. All these passages, if duely compared and examined, do not furnish us with any Matter, proving the Christian Church to be a State, or to have any resemblance to a Temporal Sovereignty.

The Condition of the primitive Church was such, as not to permit a Sovereignty within it self.

§. 31. But; besides what has been said already, a great many Reasons may be alledged, which sufficiently prove, that it was not in the power of the Apostles, to plant a Church, resembling in Power, to a Temporal Sovereignty, if they had entertained any Thoughts of attempting a Design both unnecessary and illegal. The common Security is the main End of every Government, whereby Men are enabled to defend themselves by their united strength against all Injuries; which cannot be performed without a considerable number of stout and well appointed Men. But the Name of the Church, is often given to the Congregations of an indifferent Town, nay even of private Families; And does not our Saviour himself say? *Where two or three are gathered in my Name,* Mat. 18. 20. *there am I in the midst of them.* Which moved *Tertullian* to say: *Three make up a Church, as well as a Colledge.* And where Christ is in the midst of a Congregation, certainly there cannot

not be wanting ſufficient Means to obtain Salvation, *viz.* the Word, the Miniſter, and the Sacraments; ſo, that the end and ſcope of the Chriſtian Religion may be attained to, even in an indifferent numerous Congregation of the Believers. Neither does the greater number of the Believers joyned in one Church (like a vaſt number of People is neceſſary for the erecting of a State) in it ſelf conſidered, add any thing, or is neceſſary for the obtaining the end of the Chriſtian Religion, it being indifferent, in regard of obtaining Salvation; whether a Man worſhip God in a great or ſmall Congregation. From whence this inference may be made, That, in caſe, the greateſt part of the Church ſhould ſeparate it ſelf from the others, the reſt, notwithſtanding all this, may purſue and obtain the End of the Chriſtian Faith; Quite otherwiſe as it is with Temporal Commonweaths, where, if the greateſt part of its Inhabitants happen to be rooted out, the reſt will be thereby diſinabled to maintain the State. Theſe Qualifications belonging to Subjects; eſpecially to ſuch of them as are to be preferred before others in a State, either for their Uſefulneſs, or the honour of the Commonwealth, are not eſteemed the ſame in the Church, ſo, that he, who does not excel in Riches, Strength or Wiſdom, ſhall therefore not be deemed a good Chriſtian. Furthermore; thoſe that pretend to lay the Foundation of a new State, muſt have Territories belonging to them, where their new Subjects may ſettle themſelves and their Fortunes. And, all ſuch as live, or are ſeated in a Commonwealth, if they pretend to ſet up a new State, muſt either

1 Cor. 20. 21, 22.

tranſplant

tránſplant themſelves into another Country, or elſe overturn that Government, under which they then live. So, when *Moſes* delivered the *Iſraelites* from the *Ægyptian* Bondage, he led them into the Deſarts of *Arabia*. And, when *Romulus* had reſolved to erect a new Commonwealth, he firſt withdrew himſelf from the Subjection of the Kings of *Alba*; and ſuch of the Neighbouring Countries, as were for being Members of that new Commonwealth, did leave their former Habitations, and ſettled themſelves in *Rome*. But neither Chriſt, nor his Apoſtles, did ever remove Chriſtians from their Habitations to other Places, but allowed every body to remain in the ſame Station, and under the ſame Government, without the leaſt prejudice to the former Rights of their Sovereigns over them. From whence it is evident, that the Chriſtians, tho' never ſo numerous, could not be in a condition to ſettle themſelves under any one State of their own, For, ſince, according to the Rules of the Chriſtian Religion, the Rights of Sovereigns over their Subjects Lives and Goods, are not taken away or impair'd, and no body can be ſubject to two Maſters, there could be no pretence of erecting a new Sovereignty; eſpecially in the midſt of another Commonwealth, nay, it was beyond their Power, even to enter into ſuch a Society, as ſhould be in the leaſt prejudicial to the Rights of their preſent Sovereigns. Who can be ſo ignorant in civil Affairs, as not to underſtand, what prodigious Sums of Money are required for the maintainig of a State. And, tho' the Rights of

Rom. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

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Sovereigns do not extend so far as to take away from Subjects the private disposal of their Goods; nevertheless may they lawfully restrain the Extravagancy of their Subjects, if they pretend to dispose of their Goods in prejudice of the State. For; if this Liberty should be granted to the Subjects without limitation, the State, if deprived o its nourishment would quickly be reduced to a languishing condition, or else, private Men might be enabled to erect a new State in the midst of the old one, or at least, to impair, and endanger the Publick Safety. And, since those Sovereigns, under whose Jurisdiction the Apostles lived, had the same Right over the Fortunes of their Subjects, as other Governments have; and the Rights of Sovereigns were not taken away, by the Doctrine of Christ, there could be no other provision made for the maintainance of those Congregations, (as such) but what was consistent with the lawful Rights of their Sovereigns, and as much only as might lawfully be given by private Persons; which could not exceed a private Fortune, and were nothing more than Voluntary Contributions or Alms; And, whatsoever of any real Estate was attributed to these Uses, was thereby not exempted from paying of Taxes, no more than the Estates of other Subjects.

The inward Structure of the Church is quite different from that State.

§. 32. But if we take a full view of the whole Structure of Civil Societies, and by what means Subjects were united under one Government; we shall find them to differ as Heaven and Earth from that Union, which belongs properly to the Body of a Church. If

we

we trace that Original of Civil Societies or Commonwealths, it is evident, that Men having found the Inconveniencies and Dangers which attended a ſolitary Life in the free natural State, did enter and unite themſelves into Societies for their common Security: And having agreed to a certain Form of Government, did conſtitute one certain Perſon, or a Counſel, who were to be the ſupream Governours of that Society; unto whom they ſubmitted themſelves and their fortunes, for the common Benefit of that Society. But Churches were erected upon quite another Foundation. For here, Men, being made ſenſible of their miſerable condition, did not by their own accord and a general agreement, turn themſelves to God Almighty, but, being on the contrary overwhelmed with Darkneſs and Ignorance, ſo, as to be over ſecure, and neglecting their owu Salvation, God did ſend his Meſſengers among them, *commanding all men every where to repent*. Here is not the leaſt footſtep of any general Agreement of Men to erect and ſubmit themſelves under one Church; but each particular Perſon for himſelf, without any reſpect or regard to others did follow Chriſt and his Doctrine. And, whereas in a Civil State, the whole family has its dependency from their Maſter, and enjoys all the Privileges belonging to them under his Protection; it is quite different in the Church, where the Wife is not obliged to follow her Husband's Religion, nor the Servant the Maſter. So, were in the family of *Narciſſus* (who himſelf was not a Chriſtian

Acts 17, 30.

1 Cor. 7: 12, 21.

ſeveral

several Christian Servants, who are saluted as such by S. *Paul*. And in this sense is to be taken what is said by Christ, He that loved Father or Mother, Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me: As likewise what is mentioned concerning Divisions, Discords, Dissensions, which are to be raised by the Doctrine of Christ among the nearest Friends, is to be understood of the strict Union betwixt Christ and the Believers, which surpasses, and is to be preferred before all the Tyes of Consanguinity among Men. So that, if a Father, Husband or Master should turn Apostate, the Son, Wife or Servant are not obliged to follow their footsteps. Neither is it requisite to be solicitous about any particular or certain Form of Government in the Church, *viz.* whether the same ought to be Monarchical, Aristocratical or Democratical. For, these several Forms belonging only to a Civil Government are very preposterously made use of in the behalf of the Church, which is far different from a Temporal State. And as Churches and Commonwealths are erected for different Ends: so the Offices belonging to both are altogether of a different Nature. Who is so ignorant as not to know, that for the obtaining the Ends of Civil Societies, it was requisite to constitute various Degrees of Dignities appertaining to the Managers of the State; whereas the most plain and natural Distinction betwixt Christians in reference to the Church, is only that of Teachers and Auditors.

Rom. 16. 11.
Mat. 10. 37
c. 12. 50.
Luk. 14. 26.
Mat. 10. 34.

§. 33. Be-

§. 33. Beſides all this, the Teachers in a Church, do not only differ from Temporal Governours in a State, in that theſe are conſtituted for different Ends: But the main Difference is the very nature of their Conſtitution. We will not inſiſt here upon the Point of Succeſſion, by which a great many Sovereigns obtain their Sovereign Power, which is quite otherwiſe in the Church: But we will only treat in this place concerning the different Conſtitution betwixt Teachers, and ſuch Sovereigns, as exerciſe the Supream Civil Power, by Vertue of Election. When therefore the Sovereign Power is lodged in any Perſons by Election, the reſt who have thus choſen them their Supream Governour, do thereby ſubmit themſelves to the Diſpoſal of thoſe their Sovereigns, in ſuch a manner as to oblige themſelves, that whatſoever they think conducing for the publick Welfare, ſhall be taken as ſuch by the whole Body; and that they will always be ready to execute their Commands: Wherefore Sovereigns are always inveſted with a full Power to force their Subjects to a compliance with their Commands, by inflicting Puniſhments upon them. But how is it poſſible to imagine that any Church or Congregation of the Believers ſhould ever, or ought to ſubmit themſelves ſo entirely to the Pleaſure and Diſpoſal of their Teachers; as to oblige themſelves to acquieſce barely in, and to follow blindly, whatever ſhall be propoſed by them, as conducing and leading to the way of Salvation; it being certain without contradiction, that none

9 *There is a great difference betwixt Teachers in a Church, and the Governours of a State.*

none of the Believers do entirely ſubmit themſelves and their Faith to any Body but to God Almighty, whoſe Will and Commands ought to be interpreted by the Teachers of the Church, and their Auditors to be exhorted to a due Compliance with them. For, whoever it be, that propoſes any Doctrine ſurpaſſing human Reaſon, if he pretends to gain credit by his Auditors, muſt either claim it by Virtue of his own Authority, or by Compulſion, or by Virtue of a more Superiour Power. But any Man that offers Matters not agreeable to Reaſon, does thereby expoſe himſelf, and ſo looſes his Authority, except he can by other more powerful means maintain his Doctrine, and gain credit with his Auditors. It was for this Reaſon, that, to the Greeks, who were Men that ſought after Wiſdom and Reaſon, the Preaching of the Apoſtles was Fooliſhneſs. *And*
1 Cor. 1. 23. *S. Paul* was for the ſame Reaſon nick-named a *Babler* by the *Athenian* Philoſophers. Nei-
Acts 17. 18 ther is any human Power capable of enforcing the Myſteries of Faith and the Chriſtian Doctrine upon People; for which reaſon Chriſt told his Apoſtles, Go and Teach, and Believe, and that with all your hearts; to obtain which, all human means which imply any Temporal Advantages, or are forcible in their own nature, are to be taken for Trifles and inſufficient. There is then no other Way left, but that ſuch Doctrines muſt be
Mark 16. 20. verified by a Superiour Being or Principle, *viz.* the Grace of God, which always accompanies the Goſpel, and thoſe Miracles where-

with

with the Apoſtles antiently authorized their Doctrine; Tho' it is at the ſame time undeniable, that ſince the Goſpel is ſufficiently ſpread abroad in the World, we do not now any more ſtand in need of ſuch Miracles: In the ſame manner as the Thunder and Lightning which were heard at the Publiſhing of the Ten Commandments, were never repeated afterwards among the *Jews*. The Chriſtians therefore have ſubmitted their Faith and Reaſon only to Chriſt, whoſe Authority is unqueſtionable, as being God himſelf, and was teſtified by his Father's Voice from Heaven, when he ſaid, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* And, as the People of *Iſrael* willingly ſubmitted their Faith to *Moſes*, as ſoon as he had given them plain Demonſtrations of his Divine Commiſſion; ſo were they obliged to ſubimt their Faith to the Apoſtles, after they had once verified their Divine Commiſſion by their Miracles: Tho' it cannot be denied, but that their Doctrine did ſometimes produce good Effects without Miracles. It is therefore very obſervable, that when they preached and taught their Doctrine to ſuch as were well verſed in the Old Teſtament, they did not take it amiſs, if their Auditors examined their Words, whether they were conſonant with the Propheſies contained therein. From whence it is ſufficently apparent, that no body ought to engage himſelfunto a blind Obedience of ſuch Teachers, as cannot verifie their immediate Divine Commiſſion by Miracles, ſo as to make his Faith abſolutely dependant from their Doctrine

Acts 14. 3. Heb. 2. 4.

Mat. 3. 17. Luk. 9. 22.

Exod. 20. 19.

Acts 17. 10.

without Exception, but only so far, as their Doctrine is found agreeable to the Doctrine of those who had given manifest demonstrations of their divine Authority. And for this Reason it is, that it is not sufficient for a Teacher in the Church to say, so it is, and so it shall and must be: But he lies under an indispensible Obligation of making it plain and apparent, that, what he offers to his Auditors, is absolutely consonant to the Doctrine published by Christ and his Apostles. Neither ought the Auditors pin their Faith upon the Authority of their Teachers, but to refer themselves to the Authority of God and his Word, which is the Touchstone by which the Teachers Doctrine is to be examined and approved. The Schools of Philosophers used to take their Names from their Chief Teachers or Founders, as we may observe in the Schools of *Plato*, *Aristoteles* and *Zeno*: But the Church ought to have no other Name, but that she is the Church of God or Christ. It was upon that score when S. *Paul* rebuked the *Corinthians*, because some of them said, they were of
1 Cor. 1 12 *Paul*, some of *Apollo*, some of *Cephas*, and some of *Christ*. So that since the holy Scripture is now established among us, Christians ought not to be like the Disciples of *Pythagoras*, who used for their Motto, that old Saying αὐτὸς ἔφα, *He himself has spoken it*: But they have sufficient Authority to look themselves into the Holy Scripture, and to examine whether the Doctrine of their Teachers be agreeable to the Doctrine of our Saviour. For, Christ, when he said, *search the Scriptures*, did not only speak to his Disciples,

sciples, but to his Auditors in general. And *S. Paul* bid us *to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good. S. John* says, *that we shall try the Spirits, whether they are of God.* Neither can I conceive how the Examination of our selves, which *S. Paul* so highly recommends to all that intend to be Partakers of the Lords Supper, can be duely performed without meditating the Scriptures. For, in this case, I take the condition of a Teacher and of a Physician, to be quite different; it being only required in the latter to understand the Art of Physick, and to apply the same to his Patients, which may be done with good Success, tho' they be never so ignorant. But it is not sufficient for a Teacher of a Church to be alone versed in the Articles of the Christian Religion; that Church being to be deemed most excellent, where the Auditors are not inferiour to their Teachers in the Cognition of the Mysteries of the Faith. For the Apostles did not shun to declare unto Mankind all the Counsel of God, having not committed the Christian Doctrine to the care and custody of one particular Person, who was to be the only Interpreter of it, as the Sibyllin Oracles were antiently at *Rome* in the Custody of the *Decemviri.* And because Christians do not build their Faith upon any Human Authority, but upon the Word of God alone, they are said to be taught of God. For which Reason S. *Paul* utterly denied that they had any Dominion over the Faith of the *Corinthians*; or, which is the same in effect, that they could

Joh. 5. 39. 1 Thes. 5. 21. 1 Joh. 4. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 28. Act. 20. 27. Joh. 6. 15. 1 Thes. 4. 9.

exercise any Dominion over them under the
2 Cor. 1. 2. Pretence of Faith. For the rest, as Christians which are well versed in the Scriptures, may, without great difficulty, try their Teacher's Doctrine by the Touchstone of the Holy Scripture: So the Catechism and other compendious Instructions relating to the chiefest Articles of the Christian Faith may be sufficient for those of a meaner Capacity, wherein all Christians ought to be well instructed in their younger Years, both by their Parents and Teachers of the Church, this being likely to prove more useful to those of an indifferent Capacity than all the other Subtilities and Controversies, which in themselves are not absolutely necessary, or requisite to be understood by every Christian in particular. And if we duely consider what is
Rom. 10. 9, 10. required by the Apostle for the obtaining of
1 Tim. 1. 5. Salvation, we shall find that this Knowledge
2 Tim. 2. 23. may be attained to without much Difficulty; because the Confession that *Jesus was Christ, the Son of God*, is the Foundation Stone, and, as it was, the Center of the Christian
Joh. 20. 31 Religion, and that this Article was chiefly opposed by the Gates of Hell in the time of the Primitive Christians, the Apostle S. *John* prescribes this as a general Rule to be particularly taken notice of by such as are of a mean Capacity: *Hereby know you* (said he)
1 Joh. 4. 2, 3. *the Spirit of God: Every Spirit that confesseth, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God; and every Spirit that confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of God.* Though from hence no Inference

ought

ought to be made, as if Christians may neglect, or ought not also to be well instructed concerning all the other Articles of Faith, or that it is indifferent for any Christian to believe, what he pleases, concerning the rest of the Articles of the Christian Doctrine.

Whether the whole Christian Church ought to be considered as a State.

§. 34. It being then evident, that there is a great difference betwixt the condition of particular Churches, and that of a State or Commonwealth: It may further be enquired into, whether perhaps those Churches united don't make up a Body like to that of a great State? For it is certain, that the Word Church is in the Scriptures attributed to the whole Body of the Believers wheresoever dispersed throughout the World; yet so, that there is not the least appearance (if a due regard be had to our Saviour's Intention) of a Design to erect a State. *Go you into all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, are the Words of our Saviour to his Disciples. Here is no mention made of any Persons, who should be the supream Governours over the rest (as is usual, and absolutely necessary in a State) nor any certain Place of Residence appointed for these Governours, from whence the rest should receive their Orders. Neither is the least care taken by what means they should maintain a Correspondency with their capital City: And truly, considering the vast Extent of the World, and the prodigious Distance of those Countries, where the Apostles Preach-d the Gospel: (besides, that there was a mortal Enmity betwixt some of these States) these were unsurmounta-

Mark. 16. 15

ble Obſtacles for the ſettling and maintaining a Correſpondency betwixt them. So that it does not appear, by what means all the Chriſtians could be united under one State. It is not denied but that there is often mention made in the Scripture, of the Union of the Chriſtians; as in the 1 *Cor.* c. 12. 12, 13. *As the body is one, and had many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body: So alſo is Chriſt. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* Chriſt ſays in the 10. Chap. of *S. John*, ver. 16, *My Sheep hear my voice, and there ſhall be one fold and one ſhepherd.* Which ſhews, that all the Sheep are brought into one Flock by hearing the Voice of their Paſtour, who is Chriſt. So it is ſaid in the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, ch. 4. ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Forbearing one another in love, endeavouring the Unity of the Spirit in the bond af peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all.* And Chriſt, in his farewel Sermon, does chiefly recommend to his Diſciples Charity and Unity, as the true Badges of Chriſtianity: And the Name of Brother which particularly belongs to the Chriſtians, ſeems to imply a general union betwixt them. But if we conſider the Nature of theſe holy Tyes, we may eaſily obſerve them to have been in no ways adapted to the Conſtitution of a temporal Government; but properly belonging to

Joh. 13.

Vid. 1 Cor. 13. Coloſ. 3. 14. Gal. 6. 16.

the

the Eſtabliſhment and Union of a myſtical Body. For, as none of them requires or implies any dependency from a Temporal Power, ſo they may belong in common to all Chriſtians, tho' living in far diſtant Countries, and ſeveral Juriſdictions.

There is no neceſſity for Chriſtians to be united under one State.

§. 35. Neither does it appear, for what end or purpoſe all the Chriſtians in General ſhould be reduced under one State. For, each Congregation or Church may with more eaſe and conveniency conſtitute Teachers in their Churches, fitly qualified for the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, and have a more watchful Eye over thoſe who are known, and near at hand, than can be expected from one ſingle Perſon, (tho' never ſo wiſe) living at a great diſtance; who being beſides this, ovewhelmed with multitude of Buſineſſes, is forced to ſee with other Peoples Eyes, and to hear with other Peoples Ears. Neither is it a ſufficient Reaſon, what is alledged, that for the compoſing and determining of ſuch Differences as may ariſe betwixt the Teachers of the Church, or betwixt them and others, a General Court ought to be eſtabliſhed in the Chriſtian Church, it being evident, that ſuch Caſes can be no where determined with more conveniency, than in the ſame Government where they live; and that there cannot any ſufficient reaſon be given, why they ſhould not acknowledge the ſame Juriſdiction with the reſt of their fellow Subjects. There is one objection which has ſomething of colour in it; for it is alledged, That if all the Chriſtian Churches throughout the World were united under one Head, (whether

under one Perſon, or a certain Aſſembly, matters not) the unity of Faith might be better preſerved, Controverſies ſooner compoſed, and Hereſies ſuppreſſed or quite extinguiſhed; but if the whole matter be duely weighed, it will appear, that ſuch an Eccleſiaſtical Monarch may be very eaſily ſpared in the Church. For, granting ſuch an univerſal Judge of all Controverſies ariſing in the Church, he muſt be ſuppoſed to be infallible, (and that beyond all contradiction) as well in point of Matter of Fact, as to the lawfulneſs of the Caſe; for it may ſo happen, that it be plain enough, whether a Doctrine be erroneous or not, when at the ſame time, it may be diſputable, whether the ſaid Error ought to be laid to a certain Man's Charge or not? For, if an Appeal be allowed from this Judge, after Sentence pronounced, there will never be an end of the Proceſs. It is therefore abſolutely requiſite, that this infallible Authority ſhould be ſo manifeſtly proved, that it cannot reaſonably be called in queſtion. For, unleſs this Authority be unqueſtionable for the deciſion of this Controverſie, we muſt run from this Judge to another, who muſt alſo be ſuppoſed to be Infallible, and ſo in infinite; it being granted by all, without Exception, that no body ought to be a Judge in hisown Caſe. And, ſince this Privilege of being Infallible, could not be granted by any body, but by God alone; (the whole Body of Chriſtians, being not inveſted with ſuch a Power) it muſt plainly be proved out of the Scriptures, that this particular Prerogative and Authority was granted to one certain Perſon, for him and his Succeſſors t

Whether it be neceſſary to ſet up a general Judge of all Controverſies in the Church?

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decide all Controverſies concerning the Articles of Faith, without being liable to any Error. But, of this there is not the leaſt footſtep in the holy Scripture; Nay, the Apoſtles, when they were ſent by Chriſt into all the World, were endued with the ſame Spirit, and had an equal Authority. So, that there is but one way now left, for the attaining to the true Knowledge of the Chriſtian Religion, both for the Teachers in the Church, and all Believers in general, which is, to ſtudy the Scriptures devoutly, and without Intermiſſion. And whoever pretends to Inſpiration, or to a prophetical Spirit, ought by undeniable Demonſtrations to juſtifie his Pretenſions. 2 Tim. 3. 14. 15.

Theſe Qualifications, which the Apoſtle *Paul* deſcribes in the 2 Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *c.* 2. 24, 25, ought to be applied to all Biſhops and Teachers in general: *And the Servant of the Lord*, he ſays, *muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach patiently. In meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth.* Out of what has been ſaid, it is apparent, that, if any one now adays, does pretend to any Prerogative, or Infallibility in deciding Controverſies as to matter of Faith, he ought to be endued with ſuch extraordinary Qualifications, as are moſt requiſite for the due Explaining and Interpreting the Senſe of the holy Scripture, and this in ſo high a degree, as that the other Teachers in the Church are not able to ſtand in Competition with him, nay, that even all their joint Endeavours, in this kind, are not to be compared

pared to his Judgment. Besides this, it must be supposed, that this universal Judge (except he be to be look'd upon as an useless Engine) must be invested with a Power to execute his Decrees, and to oblige all Christians to acquiesce in his Judgment; For, if it be supposed, that his Decrees have no other force, than as far as they influence People by the force of Truth, they would be either useless, or else this Judge in vain pretends thereby to any further Prerogative, but what he has in common with other Christians that apply themselves to the Study of the holy Scripture. Furthermore, this obliging Power must either have been obtained by a peculiar Privilegde granted by God Almighty, or by a general consent of the Christians, or by an inherent Right to a Sovereignty over all the Christian Churches. As for a priviledge granted by God, or the general consent of the Christian Churches, there is not the least Proof of it, as far as ever I could find; And as to the pretended Sovereign Power, its legal Title ought to be proved by such Documents as are suitable to so great a Pretension. For it is a very insignificant Proof, to alledge in a case of such Moment Tradition, and a long continued Usurpation, which adds nothing to the right of a long continued illegal Possession, and cannot be taken for a solid Fonndation, whereupon to build a real Pretension to such a Sovereignty; for it is possible, that, whereas something of a Prerogative was intended in the primitive times, the same, in process of Time, has been abused, and consequently degenerated into an insuffer-

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able Tyranny. We cannot therefore, but look upon such a Tradition, as has not the least foundation in the Scriptures, as very suspicious; especially, when we consider, that such a Sovereign Power is quite contrary to the true Genius of the Christian Religion. It may perhaps be objected, that nothing else can be so powerful to put a stop to all Controversies; but it ought to be considered also, that thereby the worst sort of Slavery must be introduced, worse than that whereof *Tacitus* complains in his time: *Adempto, per Inquisitiones, & loquendi audiendioq; Commercio, utque ipsa cum voce memoria perdatur, si tam in nostra potestate foret obliviſci, quam tacere. By the Inquisition the benefit of our Tongue and Ears is taken away at once; and if it was as easie to controul Mens Memories, as it is to bridle their Tongues, the very remembrance of things past, had been long ago abolished among us.* Truly, by such Methods, perhaps the Commonwealth may be stock'd with Hypocrites, and dissembling Hereticks, but few will be brought over to the Orthodox Christian Faith. As it is therefore absolutely requisite, that a hidden Ulcer should be laid open, whereby it may the sooner be purg'd from its Malignancy, and proper Remedies more immediately be applied to the affected Part; So, is it much conducing in the Church, that such Scruples and Erroneous Opinions as have seised our Minds should be brought to light, that by applying timely Remedies, they may be removed before they are gone too far; than by couching them over to let them run into a malignant Suppuration, which at last may turn

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to an incurable Gangren. It is alſo to be taken notice of, that if this Eccleſiaſtical Sovereignty be granted, there muſt of neceſſity be a double headed Sovereign Power in one State; it being evident, that Subjects would be obliged to acknowledge the Auhority of this Eccleſiaſtical Judge in point of Controverſie, as well, and in the ſame meaſure, as they do the Authority of their civil Governours in civil Actions. And, ſince this Eccleſiaſtical Sovereignty has a different ſcope from that, for which Civil Societies were erected, it muſt conſequently be of a quite different nature, and make up a particular Sovereignty. Wherefore, if both theſe ſhould happen to be joined in one Perſon, he becomes thereby at once maſter over our Lives and Conſciences: But, if this Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction be lodged in another Perſon, he muſt either at the ſame time be acknowledged to have a Power of executing his Decrees, by his own Prerogative, or elſe to have only an Authority of giving Sentence, leaving the Execution of it to the civil Magiſtrates. If the firſt of theſe two be ſuppoſed, it is evident, that a double headed Sovereignty muſt carry along with it great Inconveniencies and Diſtractions; and if the latter, thoſe that exerciſe the Sovereignty in the State, muſt be look'd upon as Executioners only to this holy Judge. All theſe Things duely conſidered, as they muſt needs occaſion great Convulſions in the State, ſo no man that is not beyond his Wits will be apt to imagine, (unleſs it be made appear by moſt evident Proofs) that Chriſt intended to introduce, by

his

his Doctrine, ſuch pernicious Diſeaſes into civil Societies. For, tho' it is impoſſible, that no Controverſies ſhould be raiſed in the Church, like Chriſt himſelf has foretold it in the Parable by *Matthew*, *c.* 13. 24. And St. *Paul* in the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 11. 19. Nevertheleſs, if any Controverſie does ariſe, he that is the firſt Author of it muſt of neceſſity maintain his Opinion, under a colour at leaſt of its being agreeable to the Scriptures. For, if any one ſhould pretend to introduce a new Article of Faith, without endeavouring to prove it out of the holy Scripture, he would be look'd upon as a mad Man, tho' he ſhould call to his aid all the Sophiſtications of the Philoſophers. And if he ſhould inſiſt upon the Authority of Traditions without the Scriptures, this would only ſerve to diſcloſe the weakneſs of that Foundation whereupon he builds his Doctrine. But, if any one ſhould make an attempt againſt any Article of Faith, received already as ſuch, in the Church, he is ſcarce worth taking notice of, unleſs he ſhould be able to alledge at leaſt, ſome ſpecious Reaſons out of the holy Scripture for his Opinion. And, in ſuch a caſe (eſpecially if his Endeavours ſeem to proceed from a real Love to Truth) he ought not to be abſolutely ſlighted, without being heard, and his Reaſons examined. So, that then the whole deciſion of the Matter muſt depend from a right Interpretation of the ſeveral paſſages in the holy Scripture relating to this Controverſie; Andto find out this Interpretation, I ſee not any neceſſity, which obliges us to have recourſe to a Sovereign Power, or

any

any infallible Authority, but only to ſuch Means, as are moſt proper for the ſearching into, and finding out the genuine Senſe of other Authors; *viz.* by a true Knowledge of the Tongue, and a diligent ſearch into the nature and whole frame of the Chriſtian Religion, and by duely comparing the Articles of Faith, and obſerving their Annology and Connexion; Whoſoever beſides this, has a natural good Judgment, and is not prepoſſeſſed with Prejudice, private Intereſt, or Paſſion, it will be no ſuch difficult Task for him, to find out the genuine Senſe of the Scriptures, and to demonſtrate it ſo plainly, that ſuch as oppoſe him, will, by the conſent of all Underſtanding People, be judged to be in the wrong. So did our Saviour at ſeveral times convince the Phariſees and Saduceans out of the whole Scripture, and by the force of his Arguments taken from thence, that they were not able to make any further reply. And why ſhould it not be reaſonably ſuppoſed, that in each Chriſtian Church, there may be found a ſufficient number of Teachers, capable of diſproving ſuch as pretend to introduce among them Innovations, and falſe Doctrines. But, ſuppoſing that theſe alone ſhould prove inſufficient, they may call to their aid thoſe of the Neighbouring moſt famous Churches. From whence it appears, that there is no abſolute Neceſſity of acknowledging a Judge General of Controverſies in the Church. And, put the Caſe, that thoſe that diſſent from the Church, are ſo numerous, as to have ſpread their Doctrine all over the State, this Judge will

prove

prove uſeleſs in his Office; For, if he pretends to have recourſe to violent means to make them renounce their falſe Opinion, they will in all probability oppoſe force to force; But, if he takes the other way, and endeavours to convince them of their Earor by Arguments taken out of the holy Scripture; this may be done as well by other Teachers fitly qualified for their Office, than by ſuch a Judge General in the Church. Neither ought we to be ſo over timerous as to believe, that Errors ſhould in ſo much prevail over Truth, as to domineer always and every where over it, it being not to be queſtion'd, but that by help of the moſt clear-ſighted Teachers in the Church, theſe Clouds may be ſoon diſperſed, and Truth again appear in its ſplendor. I appeal to Experience, whether not a great many Hereſies by the only help of prevailing Truth, without the aſſiſtance of ſuch a Judge, or any human Force have by degrees dwindled away, and at laſt quite diſappeared. It muſt be confeſt, there are ſome erroneous Opinions, which being nouriſhed and maintained by a Temporal Intereſt, and certain Reaſons of State of ſome particular Churches, are not ſo eaſie to be ſuppreſſed. Of this kind are thoſe Controverſies, wherein the Proteſtants differ with the Papiſhes; All which, if duely conſidered, are ſo deeply entangled with the Intereſt of the Popiſh Monarchy, that it is impoſſible for the *Roman Catholicks* to recede an Inch from the point of the controverted Articles, without diminution of their Authority, and endangering their great Revenues; ſo, that all hopes of an Union

nion betwixt them and the *Proteſtants*, are in vain, unleſs the latter can reſolve to ſubmit themſelves under the ſame Popiſh Yoak which they have ſhaken off ſo long ago. I cannot ſufficiently admire that groſs way of Arguing, made uſe of by the Papiſhes, when they talk of nothing elſe but the Authority of their Church, telling us, that, if we would but once acknowledge the ſame, all the Differences and Queſtions concerning the chief Articles of Faith would fall a-courſe, making themſelves both Party and Judge, and pretending to give Sentence in their own Caſe according to their own Teſtimony. They always make uſe of this Sophiſm, that they attribute only to themſelves the glorious Name of the *True Church*, excluding all orher Chriſtians from it, but ſuch as are of the ſame Communion with them. And, to back this pretence, nothing is more common among them, than to lay aſide all manner of demonſtrative Arguments founded in the Scriptures, and in lieu thereof, to find out new Methods (unknown to the Apoſtles) of Converting People; and to endeavour to eſtabliſh their Authority by all manner of violence againſt thoſe, that dare to maintain Truth in oppoſition to their Doctrine. For which reaſon God has threatned in a moſt peculia manner to deſtroy this Monſter of a State.

An Example of Controverſie compoſed in the times of the Apoſtles.

§. 37. The true Method of compoſing Controverſies ariſen in the Church, is taught us by what is ſet us as an Example of this kind in the *Acts*, c. 15. where it deſerves our moſt particular Obſervation, that the Controverſy then in queſtion was concerning a main Point

Man

in the Christian Religion, *viz.* Whether a man might be saved without being circumcised according to the Institution of *Moses*. For S. *Paul*, in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, c. 5. 2. had positively declared: *If you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing*. And it is very remarkable, that this Question was started in the very Infancy of the Church, when the Canon of the Church was not perfected, and there were not wanting living Testimonies of such as had received the Doctrine of Christ from his own mouth, and were endued with the Holy Ghost, and instructed with an Apostolical Authority. Neither is it to be doubted, but that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were endued with a sufficient Share of Wisdom and Understanding of the Holy Scripture, for the reducing of this Errour; as plainy appears out of the 5. verse of the above alledged Chapter, that they opposed such forcible Reasons against this erroneous Opinion, that those that were come thither out of *Judea*, were not able to contradict them: So they appealed to the Authority of the Church of *Jerusalem*, which being the Spring from whence the Christian Religion was derived into other Parts of the World, they hoped to be back'd in this Opinion, by such of the Members of that Church, as did not without some Reluctancy brook the Abolishing of the *Jewish* Synagogue; and that they were not quite beyond their guess, but met with a great many there that were addicted to the same Opinion, appears out of the 5th Verse in the same 15th Chapter. To prevent therefore any further Disturbance, which

Act. 15.

V. 24.

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

might be raiſed in the *Antiochian* Church by reaſon of this Controverſie, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, with ſome others, were deputed to go to the Chuch of *Jeruſalem*, to decide this Controverſie. When they came thither a Convocation was called, conſiſting not only of the Apoſtles and Presbyters, but alſo of the other Members of that Church, not excepting thoſe of the contrary ſide: After their Reaſons had been heard, the Caſe was in debate a conſiderable time; and at laſt the whole matter having been ſufficiently diſputed on both ſides, then *Peter* roſe up, not as an univerſal Judge, or who pretended to decide the Controverſie by Virtue of his Authority, but his Proceeding was by demonſtrative Arguments, telling them, what prodigious Effects had been wrought among the Gentiles by his preaching the Goſpel to them, after the Vi-
Act. 11. 9 ſion which appeared to him at *Joppe*; Where he thus argues: That ſince the Holy Ghoſt had in the ſame meaſure purified the Hearts of thoſe Believers that were uncircumciſed, it would be unreaſonable to put this Yoak upon the Neck of the Chriſtians, the more, becauſe they were not to be ſaved by Circumciſion, but through the Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, being of the ſame Opinion, did declare at the ſame time what Miracles and Wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them, which wonld not have been done, if they were to be taken for unſanctified, as being not circumciſed, or if Circumciſion was an eſſential Part of the Chriſtian Faith. After all had held their

Peace,

Peace, that is to say, no body further appearing who could contradict them or oppose their Arguments, *James* at last arose, declaring that the Vision of *Peter* did agree to the Words of the Prophets, and that therefore it was his Opinion that such among the Centiles as did turn to Christ ought not to be troubled. But that they also in some measure might gratifie themselves, and to induce them not to fly the Conversation of such of the Gentiles as received the Christian Faith, it was thought fit that these should abstain from Pollution of Idols, from Fornication, from things strangled, and from Blood, all which was forbidden by the *Mosaic* Law, and partly disagreeable to the Law of Nature; as Fornication, which nevertheless was a common Vice among the Gentiles; the rest being things indifferent in themselves, might easily be let alone, rather than give Offence to a Brother. This having been approved of by common Consent, and as it appears, even by those that were of a contrary Sentiment before, a Synodical Epistle was writ to the Church at *Antioch*, in the name not only of those Apostles and Elders, but also of the Brethren of the Church of *Jerusalem*. *Judas* and *Silas* were deputed to carry this Epistle, who being arrived at *Antioch*, did not publish it in the nature of a Law, but, having delivered it to the Brethren, (from whom it met with a general Approbation) they exhorted them with many words to a due Observance of it.

Some Observations concerning the nature and use of Councils.

§. 38. If the whole matter be duly weighed, it furnishes us with several Observations, which may not a little contribute towards tht Explaining the Nature of Ecclesiastical Councils. In the first place, it is most apparent, that these Councils are not such Bodies whose Authority is everlasting for the Government of the Church: But that they are extraordinary Convocations or Conventions, composed out of some selected and most eminent Men of the Church, who are called together for the composing certain Controversies arisen in the Church. And, because those Councils were very frequent in the Church from its Primitive times, this alone may serve as a convincing Argument, that the Church never acknowledged one infallible Judge for the deciding of Controversies. For, to what purpose were so many Heads set to work, if one single Person was sufficient and infallible in the Decision of them? And (what is yet more) if the Decrees of the Councils had only their obliging Force from his Confirmation. Furthermore, those that compose such a Council are not to be considered as Members of an Assembly or Colledge, who by the Majority of Votes can so absolutely determine the Question in hand, as to be obligatory to all Christians in general; Truth generally speaking, not depending from the Plurality of Suffrages; much less, can they pretend to a legislative Power vested in them so as to impose what Laws or Canons they please upon the Church. But, they may be considered no otherwise than Men deputed by

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the Churches for the examining the true Grounds of the Controverſies laid before them, and for ſearching for the Deciſion of them in the Holy Scripture; So that theſe Churches are not obliged to acquieſce in this Deciſion any further than they find it agreeable to the Word of God. For it may chance to fall out ſo that a Controverſie which appears at firſt ſight very intricate and difficult, afterwards being well weighed and the Reaſons thereof duly examined on both ſides, is very plain and eaſy to be determined. But if any moral Decrees are made by a Council, the ſame are to be taken to have no obliging Power, but what proceeds either from a preceding Commiſſion and Authority, or from the Approbation of theſe Churches; ſo that Chuncils have no coercive Power over the Church. I cannot but touch, by the by, upon this Head, *viz.* that this Aſſertion; *The Council is above the Pope*, is of ſuch a Nature as will eaſily gain credit with all that are guided by right Reaſon, or the Scriptures. For, who can be ſo ſtupid as not to be ſenſible, that a great many learned Men, who with joint labour apply themſelves to the ſearch after Truth, are to be preferred before the Judgment of one ſingle Perſon, and that oftentimes of ſuch a one, who has but a very indifferent inſight into the Holy Scriptures and Divinity. This ſeems to imply ſomewhat of a Contradiction, that this Point is aſſerted by the ſelf-ſame People, who make the Papal Chair the Center of the Church, and the Pope the Oecumenick Biſhop: For,

the *Romish* Church pretends to be a Monarchical State; but this Assertion of the Superiority of the Councils, savours most of an Aristocracy. But this Riddle may be unfolded in a few Words: The *French* Clergy allows the Pope to be the Supream Head of the Church, as far as they find it suitable with their Interest. But whenever he attempts any thing against them, or the States Policy of that Kingdom, the old Song of the Liberty of the *Gallican* Church, and the antient Doctrine of the *Sorbone* is revived, which serves the *French* Clergy now and then for a Pretext, to persuade the vulgar sort of People, that the *Gallican* Church has not been polluted with those gross and abominable Errours as are introduced in the Church of *Rome*. The next thing to be considered is, that it is most evident, that if a Controversie arises, which may be decided within the Body of one Church, there is no Occasion for the Communicating in such a Point with other Churches; And, that, in case one Church alone is not stock'd sufficiently with able Teachers for the composing of the Difference, and therefore must call to its Aid those of other Churches, it is superfluous to call together a greater number than may be sufficient for the accomplishment of the Work. So did the Church of *Antioch* refer the whole Controversie to those of *Jerusalem*, without giving the least Trouble to those of *Phenice* and *Samaria*, though their Deputies passed in their Way thither through both these Places. Besides this, the Deputies that are sent, ought to receive their Authority and Instruction from

from their ſeveral Churches, whom they repreſent, becauſe no Church has without reſerve ſubmitted herſelf to the Determination of her Teachers, but only as far as their Doctrine is agreeable to the Word of God. Neither are the Words in the Epiſtle to the *Hebr.* c. 13. 17. to be underſtood any otherwiſe than with this Limitation. Beſides this, it is abſolutely requiſite that ſuch Perſons as have raiſed a Controverſie ſhould be heard in the Council, that their Reaſons ſhould be duely examined, weighed, and proceeded upon, according to the Rules preſcribed in the Holy Writ. And if the Controverſie does not barely concern a Point of Doctrine, but implies a Temporal Intereſt, thoſe that have any Share in it cannot pretend to a Power of deciding the Point in Prejudice of the adverſe Party. From whence it is evident, that the Points in queſtion betwixt the Proteſtant Church and the Papal Chair cannot be compoſed by any Council, their Difference ariſing not barely from Point of Doctrine, but about Domination, Temporal Dignities, and vaſt Revenues. Nor is there the leaſt Probability of any Compoſition betwixt theſe two Parties by way of Arbitration; For who is it that can pretend to decide ſo great a Point? Who is likely to be accepted of as an Arbitrator by both Parties? The Proteſtants, in all likelihood, will not be ſo fooliſh as to ſubmit themſelves and their Caſe to the Determination of any Aſſembly conſiſting all of *Roman* Catholicks their ſworn Enemies; nor can they have the Imprudence as to ask it. And as for

the Pope, he likes his Station too well, to put it to the Hazard of an Arbitration. But if an Assembly should be proposed to consist of an equal Number chosen by each Party, this Expedient would scarce take, it being to be feared that they would scarce keep within the bounds of Moderation, and that the Assembly would appear sometimes not unlike the Feast of the Centaures.

In what condition the Churches were under the Pagan Emperours.

§. 39. It having been hitherto demonstrated at large, that the Church is no State, we must consider in the next place, unto what kind of moral Bodies the Churches have the neareſt relation, as they were in primitive Times under the Pagan Princes. It is evident enough, That they were of the nature of Colledges, or such Societies, where a great many are joined for the carrying on a certain Business, under this limitation nevertheless, as not to be independent from the Civil Jurisdiction. Concerning the nature of the Colledges and Corporations, *Jacobus Cujachus* may be consulted before all others, 7 *Observ.* 30, and 16; and *Observ.* 3, and 5. And it is here very well worth our most particular Observation, that such Societies as were erected for the exercise of Religion were by Publick Authority allowed of in the antient *Roman* Empire. This is attested among a great many others, by *Athanagoras*, in the beginning of his Apology for the Christians, when he says: *It is by your Command, you greateſt of Princes, that several Nations live according to their own Customs and Laws, and everey one, without being controuled by any Penal Statutes, freely exercise the same Religion*

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gion in which he was educated. And thus he proceeds immediately after: *All Mankind offer their Sacrifices, and use other Religious Ceremonies, according to the Custom of their Native Country.* This Liberty of Conſcience was, among others, the true cauſe, why the Chriſtian Religion in ſo ſhort a time did ſpread it ſelf all over ſo vaſt an Empire, and why in the beginning, very few oppoſed its Progreſs, the Magiſtrates not thinking it belonging to their Province to intermeddle with it, And this is one Reaſon, why we never read of the Apoſtles having deſired leave from the Civil Magiſtrates to preach the Goſpel, or to plant a Church. Tho' another Reaſon may be given, why the Apoſtles were not obliged to ask leave from the Civil Magiſtrates for the Conſtituting of Chriſtian Churches; becauſe the Apoſtles had received their immediate Authority of Preaching the Goſpel from him, who is the *King of kings*, and by whoſe Command all Mankind were then called to repentance. From what has been ſaid, this rational Concluſion may be drawn; That the Apoſtles had not only a Power to plant Churches in all places, where they found their Auditors inclined to receive the Doctrine of the Goſpel, but that, alſo in all other places, whither this Doctrine was tranſplanted, the Believers might enter into ſuch a Society, or plant a Church upon their own accord, without any Commiſſion or Permiſſion for ſo doing, from the Apoſtles; but, that, purſuant to our Saviour's Expreſſion, it was ſufficient, if two or three were inclined to meet in his Name. If we trace the true nature of theſe Societies,

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which are conſtituted by a free Choice and Conſent of certain Men. we may eaſily find to contain, all of them, ſomething reſembling a Democracy, where ſuch Matters as concern the whole Body of the Society are to be diſpatched by common Conſent, and where no particular Perſon can claim any further Power over the reſt, than what he has received by their joint Conſent. From whence it may be rationally concluded, that at the firſt beginning, the Power of Conſtituting Teachers, and other Miniſters of the Church, was originally lodged in the whole Church, or, the whole Congregation of the Believers. And, tho' it is unqueſtionable, that in the firſt primitive Church, Teachers were conſtituted by the Apoſtles in a great many places; nevertheleſs the *Greek* word Κειρω τονειν, (which implies ſomething of a Democracy, and is often uſed in the Scriptures in this Caſe) argues ſufficiently, that this was not done without the Approbation of the Church. It would be a hard Task to prove, that the Apoſtles did conſtitute Teachers themſelves in all leſſer Towns, or that they preached the Goſpel in all leſſer Places and Villages. It ſeems rather probable, that the Goſpel was publiſhed by the Apoſtles in great Cities, and other places of note; from whence it was communicated unto other Places; and, that ſuch Churches, as were not provided with Teachers, Biſhops, or Presbyters by the Apoſtles themſelves, or their ſpecial Authority, uſed either to chuſe thoſe very Perſons to that Function, who were the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel among them,

or

or any others, whom they esteemed to be endowed, before others, with the Gift of Teaching. If we consult the Epistle of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, it seems that the Gospel had been taught at *Rome*, before ever *Peter* and *Paul* came thither; And the High Treasurer of the Queen *Candaces*, who is generally believed to have first carried the Doctrine of the Gospel to *Æthiopia*, and to have been the first Founder of the Christian Churches in those Parts, received no Ordination as a Bishop or Presbyter from *Philip*, after his Baptism. Neither did Christ or his Apostles prescribe any certain Form, to be used in the Ordination of Bishops, as he did in the use of the Sacraments; which seems to prove that for the obtaining of this Function, there is nothing more required, than for the Person to be called by the Church, and to have the Gift of Teaching. It is not to be denied, but that the Ordination of Ministers, and Imposition of Hands by the Bishops and Presbyters is a very laudable and useful Ceremony, and ought to be received as such, with this restriction nevertheless, that the same need not to be deemed so absolutely necessary, as if without it no Person ought to be taken for a true Minister of the Church; especially since these miraculous Gifts which accompanied that Ceremony in the Infancy of the Primitive Church are many Ages past, become useless. The Church, like all other Colledges, have power to collect Stipends for their Ministers, and to make Collections for the Use of the Poor; but in a different degree from that which belongs to Civil Magistrates or Sove-

Chap. 16.

Acts 8.

1 Tim. 4. 14.

reigns,

reigns, who levy Taxes. and have a Power to force their Subjects to a compliance with their Commands; But, in the Church this Power is founded upon the meer Liberality and free Consent of all the Believers in general, who being made sensible of their Duty of paying a Workman his Stipend, and relieving those in Distress, ought not to refuse such Acts of Justice and Humanity. It properly belongs to all Colledges as well as Churches, to have a Power to make, with joint Consent of their Members, such Statutes, as may conduce towards the obtaining the Ends of their Society, provided they do not interferewiththe legalRights of their Sovereigns. Of this kind are these Statutes, which St. *Paul* recommends to the *Corinthians* in his first Epistle, in the 7 *Chapt.* If any one acted contrary to these Rules, he deservedly was to receive Correction, or to undergo such a Penalty as was dictated by the Statute, and which was to be laid upon him not by Vertue of an Inherent Power in the Colledge, but pursuant to their Contract. And, tho' Colledges have not any Power or Jurisdiction over their Members, unless what is absolutely requisite for the obtaining the true end of each Society, or else has been granted to them by their Sovereigns; Nevertheless, it is often practised in these Societies, and may be done without prejudice to the Rights of their Sovereigns, that, if any Differences arise betwixt the Members of one and the same Colledge, these are composed by the Interposition and Arbitration of the rest of the Members of that Colledge or Society, to the End, that a mutual

1 Cor. 8. 2, 3. c. 2. 12, 13. c. 9. 5, 9, 7.

mutual good Correſpondency may be cultivated among them. In which ſenſe is to be taken the Admonition which St. *Paul* gives to the *Corinthians* concerning this point in the 1 Epiſtle, in the 6 *Chapter*, in the firſt and following *Verſes*. Laſtly, becauſe many Vices were at the time of the firſt publiſhing of the Goſpel in vogue among the Heathens, which were not puniſhable by the Pagan Laws, they being more encouraged to the obſervance of Moral Duty by the proſpect of Honours than by any civil Commands; And, the Chriſtians believing it more peculiarly belonging to themſelves to recommend and adorn their Profeſſion by a holy Life, and, by an innocent Converſation, to excel the Heathens, ſome Statutes were, at the very beginning, introduced into the Primitive Church, which were thought moſt convenient to correct all manner of Licentiouſneſs, according to St. *Paul*'s Direction: *If any one that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one do not eat.* 1 Cor. 5. 1. 2. From whence it appears, that in the primitive Times, Church Cenſure was uſed in the Churches, all which may eaſily be ſuppoſed to have been done without the leaſt prejudice to the Sovereign Power, it being always for the Intereſt of the State, that Subjects ſhould lead an innocent Life. It is worth our Obſervation, that the Puniſhments inflicted by vertue of theſe Statutes, were of ſuch a nature, as might be put in execution without the leaſt prejudice to the Civil Government; ſuch were private Admonitions, publick Reprimands, and Church

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Penances, the extream Remedy was Excommunication, by vertue of which, a Member of the Church was either for a time deprived from enjoying the benefit of the Publick Worſhip, or entirely excluded from being a Member of the Church. This being the utmoſt, unto which any Colledge can pretend, *viz.* entirely to exclude a Member of their Society. This Excluſion, tho' in it ſelf conſidered, of the greateſt moment, (ſince thereby a Chriſtian was deprived of the whole Communion with the Church) Nevertheles did not alter the Civil State or Condition of a Subject; But thoſe that were thus excommunicated ſuffered no loſs in their Dignities, Honour, Rights, or Fortunes. For, that the Church Cenſures ſhould extend to the real Prejudice of the civil Condition of any Subject, is not any ways requiſite for the obtaining the Ends for which the Church is Eſtabliſhed; Neither can it be ſuppoſed, that without defrauding Sovereigns of their Right, ſuch a Power can be exerciſed over Subjects, unleſs with their own Conſent, and by vertue of a publick Civil Authority.

Concerning the condition of the Church under Chriſtian Princes.

§. 40. The next thing which deſerves our Conſideration is, whether the Church is, and how far it received any Alteration from its former Condition, after Princes, whole Kingdoms, and States did profeſs the Chriſtian Religion? Where it is to be obſerved, That the Churches did thereby not receive any eſſential Perfection; it being evident, that the Chriſtian Religion could be exerciſed, and ſubſiſt without the State; and Commonwealths did not depend from the Chriſtian Religion;

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The ſcope of the Chriſtian Religion, and of civil Governments, being quite different in their own nature. For, *our* πολίτευμα, *our Converſation is in Heaven*; and, *if in this Life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all Men moſt miſerable.* For this Reaſon it was, that the Apoſtles were never forward to appear before Princes, tho' they might have obtained an eaſie Acceſs by their miraculous Deeds. So *Herod* was exceeding glad when he ſaw *Jeſus*, becauſe he hoped to have ſeen ſome Miracle done by him. But they were very cautious in this point, leſt it might appear to ſome, as if the Goſpel wanted to be maintained by Human Strength, or that perhaps thoſe Princes might pretend to a greater Authority over them, than was conſiſtent with the ſafety of the Chriſtian Religion. Notwithſtanding all this, the Chriſtian Religion does not in any wiſe impair or ecclipſe the legal Rights of Sovereigns, but rather confirms and eſtabliſhes the civil Power, as is apparent out of ſeveral paſſages in the holy Scripture. If it ſhould be granted that the Church was a State independent from any temporal Juriſdiction, the conſequence would be this, That the civil Power could not but receive a moſt remarkable Limitation and Diminution, and the condition of a Subject muſt receive a great alteration; whereas on the other hand, the condition of Chriſtians, or of Teachers in the Church (conſidered as ſuch) is neither aboliſhed nor altered, becauſe either the Prince, or the Subjects in general do receive the Chriſtian Faith, there being not the leaſt footſtep to be met withal in the Scriptures,

Phil. 3. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 14. 19. Luke 23. 8. Mat. 27. 21. Joh. 18. 2. Rom. 13. 1 Cor. 35. 24.

ptures, implying any such alteration: Besides this, there is not any expreſs Command in the New Teſtament, directed to Sovereigns, which entitles them to any particular Prerogative in the Church, like to that which the Kings of *Iſrael* had received in the 17 *Chap.* of *Deuteronomy*: From whence ariſes this concluſion, that, what right Sovereigns can claim in the Church, and Church Affairs, muſt be deduced, either out of the natural conſtitution of the civil Power, or out of the true Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, or elſe muſt owe its off-ſpring to the free conſent of the Church.

Churches do not alter their nature of being a Colledge.

§. 41. Out of what has been laid down, it appears firſt of all, that, if a Prince or whole Commonwealth, do receive the Doctrine of Chriſt, the Church does thereby not receive any other Alteration, as to her natural Conſtitution, but that, whereas ſhe was formerly to be conſidered only as a private Society or Colledge, yet ſuch a one as being ſubordinate to the Law, and therefore to be cheriſhed by the Higher Powers, who had no legal Right to diſturb, proſecute or deſtroy it; She now being put under the particular Protection of her Sovereigns, enjoys a greater ſhare of Security, and is beyond the reach of the Perſecutions of the Infidels. Notwithſtanding this, the Church is thereby not exalted from a Colledge to a State, ſince, by the receiving of the Chriſtian Religion, the civil Government does not undergo any Alteration or Diminution; On the contrary, Sovereigns looſe nothing of their legal Rights, neither are Subjects in any wiſe

wiſe abſolved from their Duties and Obligations. For it implies a contradiction, that a double Sovereignty, and two different ſorts of Obligations in the Subject ſhould be lodged in one and the ſame Commonwealth. It is a frivolous Objection, that the Church and civil Government have different Ends and Objects, not repugnant to one another; For, from thence is not to be inferred, that the Church muſt be a State, or that the Chriſtian Religion cannot be propagated, maintained or exerciſed, without the Church aſſume the ſame Power that belongs to the civil Government. In theſe places therefore, where the whole People and the Prince profeſs the Chriſtian Religion, the Commonwealth receives the Church into its Protection, and, tho' ſtrictly united, there is no colliſion or emulation betwixt them, nor does either of them receive any prejudice in their reſpective Rights, but without the leaſt Interference with one another, the Church remains a Colledge, whereof the Prince, and all the Subjects are now become Members. So, that each Subject, beſides the Perſon he repreſented in the State, has aſſumed that of a Chriſtian, and in this reſpect is eſteemed a Member of the Church. Neither is every one to be conſidered in the Church according to the Station or Dignity he bears in the Commonwealth, but, theſe Qualifications are, as it were, laid aſide there, and he is only regarded as a Chriſtian. So, that the General of an Army cannot claim any Prerogative to himſelf in the Church beyond the private Centinel. And it is paſt all doubt, that one and the ſame Man

may repreſent ſeveral Perſons, according to the ſeveral Functions and Obligations belonging to him.

Princes are thereby not made Biſhops.

§. 42. It is alſo, according to my Opinion, beyond queſtion, that Kings, Princes, or other civil Magiſtrates, by receiving the Chriſtian Doctrine, are not conſtituted Biſhops or Teachers in the Church, this Function not properly belonging to every Chriſtian, but only to ſuch as have a lawful Vocation, and are fitly qualified for it. Beſides this, the Royal Office and that of Teachers are of ſuch a nature, that they cannot conveniently be Adminiſtred by one and the ſame Perſon, not, becauſe of any natural repugnancy betwixt them, but that each of them is involved in ſuch a multitude of Trouble and variety of Buſineſs, that it cannot rationally be ſuppoſed for one Man to be able to undergo ſuch a Fatigue. It is no leſs evident, that Sovereigns, by becoming Chriſtians, are not authoriſed to alter the Miniſtry of the Church, or to order it at pleaſure, or to force the Miniſters of the Goſpel to teach any Doctrine which is not founded in the Scriptures, or to preach up Human Inventions for Articles of Faith. For, what, and how Miniſters ought to Teach, is preſcribed by God himſelf, who expects an exact Obedience in this Point, as well from Kings as other Chriſtians. And it is to be conſidered, that whenever Princes receive the Chriſtian Doctrine, the Teachers, notwithſtanding this, remain in their former Station as to their Duty and Obligation to God, as well, as all the reſt of their Chriſtian Subjects, who having re-

received their Instructions, as to their Religion, only from God, without the assistance of their Sovereigns, these cannot claim any right to impose any thing of this kind upon them.

§. 43. Notwithstanding all this, it is not to be supposed that Sovereigns, by becoming Christians, have acquir'd no peculiar Rights, or have not a more particular Duty laid upon them than before; There being certain Obligations, which owe their off-spring to the union of that Duty, which is incumbent to every Christian, with that of the Royal Office. The first and chiefest of these Obligations seems to be, that Sovereigns ought to be Defenders of the Church, which they are oblig'd to protect not only against all such of their Subjects, as dare to attempt any thing against it, but also against Foreigners, who pretend to be injurious to their Subjects upon that score. And, tho' the Christian Doctrine is not to be propagated by violence or force of Arms, and our Saviour has highly recommended Patience and Sufferings as peculiar Vertues belonging to Christians, Princes are nevertheless not debarr'd from their Right of Protecting the Christian Religion by all lawful means, and Patience ought not to take place here, except when no other lawful means can secure us against our Enemies. So we see that St. *Paul* saved himself from being scourged by declaring himself to be a *Roman*, and escaped the Fury of the *Jews* by making his Appeal to the Emperour. And our Saviour himself left this Advice to his Disciples, That *when they were persecuted in one City, they should fly into another.*

Concerning the Duty and Right of Christian Princes of defending the Church.

Acts 22. 25.

Mat. 10. 23.

And, it being an incumbent Duty belonging to all Sovereigns, to defend their Subjects against all violence; they ought to take more effectual care that they do not suffer any Injuries for the Christian Religions sake; for, what could be more reproachful to a Christian Prince, than that his Subjects should be sufferers upon that account? The next care which belongs to Christian Princes, is, to provide necessary Revenues for the exercise of the Christian Religion. For as has been shewn before, that no other Patrimony belonged to the Primitive Church, but the Alms and free Contributions of the Believers, and that these cannot but be supposed to be very uncertain, the Ministers and Teachers in the Church run no small hazard of being exposed to want, if they have nothing else to rely upon, but the bare contributions of the Congregation, who being in some places poor, and Subject to other Taxes, are incapable of supplying their want. And, not to dissemble the Truth, after Princes and entire States have received the Doctrine of Christ, it would appear very ill, that, whereas they enjoy such ample Revenues, they would deal so sparingly with the Church, the more, because it is a general Maxim among Men, to value a Function according to its Revenues. What St. *Paul* recommends to the *Romans* in the 15th *Chapter*, *v.* 27. and in the 1 Epist. to the *Corinthians* 9. 11. ought to be the more taken notice of by Christian Princes, because they can with less difficulty, or any sensible injury to themselves, put it in practise in their Station, they having the management of the Publick

blick Revenues in their hands. It cannot be denied, but that too vaſt Revenues are not always uſeful to Miniſters of the Church, and prove ſometimes prejudicial both to Church and State; and that ſuch as make profeſſion of the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, ought not to make a Trade of their Function, or to think it their main Buſineſs to gather Riches, and take the Miniſtry for their By-work; nevertheleſs, if it be duely conſidered, that he who cordially (as he ought to do) applies himſelf to the Miniſterial Function, has no other ways left him to provide for his Family; and that the vulgar Sort ſcarce pay a due Reſpect to a Miniſter, unleſs they ſee him live handſomely and well; whereas he, who is ſtarv'd by his Function is the May-Game of the common People, unto whom may be applied that old Saying of the Poet; *That this Man appears to be the Servant of a poor and wretched Lord. Apparet ſervum hunc eſſe Domini pauperis miſerique.* Princes ought therefore to look upon this as one main part of their Devotion, to ſettle certain and conſtant Sallaries or Revenues upon the Miniſters of the Church, as much as may be, at leaſt ſufficient for their Maintainance. In the Old Teſtament the Prieſts were to live from the Altar, but thoſe of the beſt kind were brought to the Altar. Beſides this, Princes ought not only to take care of Church-Buildings, but alſo to erect and maintain Schools, which being the Seminaries both of the Church and State, if the firſt Rudiments of Chriſtianity be not implanted in the Schools, it cannot ſcarce be expected, that Men, when grown up,

vid. Ep. Gal. 6. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 4.

should receive much benefit by publick Sermons.

Concerning the rights of Princes, as to Ecclesiastical Affairs. And first, of the general Inspection.

§. 44. But among other Considerations, as to what Rights properly belong to Princes as to Ecclesiastical Affairs, it is evident, that, since by the Doctrine of the Gospel the Civil Power is in no wise impaired, and a Prince cherishes a Church under his Jurisdiction, he legally claims a Right of having a general Inspection over this as well as all other Societies; at least, so far as to take care that nothing be transacted in these Colledges to his Prejudice. For Mankind being so perverse in its Nature, that in Matters, even the most Sacred, if managed without controul, they seldom let it slip through their hands without a Stain; And that therefore it is scarce to be questioned, but the Christian Doctrine is subject to the same Corruption, and that under Pretence of Religion many pernicious Designs may be hatched against the Interest of the Commonwealth. A Prince in whose Territories a Church is planted, if he afterwards enters into the Communion of that Church, has questionless a Right to examin what Matters, and in what Manner they are transacted in the Convention of their Presbyters, or in their Ecclesiastical Courts, if there be any such among them; Whether they do not transgress their Bounds? whether they act according to the Civil Laws, or whether they do not assume to themselves a Power to determine such Cases as properly belong to the Civil Jurisdiction? Of this Kind are Matrimonial Cases, which without Reason, and upon very slender Pretences, the Priests have drawn un-

under their Jurisdiction, to the great Prejudice of the Sovereign Power; For, it being an unquestionable Right belonging to Sovereigns to constitute Laws concerning Matrimonial Cases, according to the Law of Nature and of God, I cannot see any Reason why they have not a Right to determine Matrimonial Differences. And because the Ministers of the Church make use of Church-discipline, the Prince may make a legal Enquiry whether, under Pretence of these Rules prescribed by our Saviour, they do not introduce Novelties, which may prove prejudicial to the State? And as these Enchroachments are no essential Part of the Christian Doctrine, but rather to be looked upon like Spots which disguise its natural Beauty; So, I cannot see with what Face it can be denied, that those ought to be taken off, especially by the Authority of those whose Interest is most nearly concerned; unless they have Impudence enough to own, that the Christian Religion may lawfully be misapplied to By-uses. And let it be granted, that every thing is transacted as it ought to be in these Conventions of the Presbyters, Consistories or Episcopal Courts, why should they be asham'd or angry at their Sovereigns taking Cognisance of their Proceedings. And this Right of Inspection does never cease after the Sovereign has once entred into the Communion of the Church, it being his Duty to take care that no Abuses may creep into the Church, in process of Time, that may endanger the State.

Concerning the Right of Princes, as to Church Ministers.

§. 45. Because the Right of Constituting Ministers of the Church does originally belong to the whole Congregation the Prince must needs have his Share in it, as being a Member of the Congregation; I say his Share: For it is not reasonable that a Minister should be forced upon any Church against their Consent, and without their Approbation, except it be for very weighty Reasons. For, the Right of Constituting Ministers in the Church does not belong to the Prince in the same manner, as it is his Prerogative to constitute Civil Magistrates and other Publick Ministers of State, which being a part of the Sovereign Power, cannot be called in question. But Teachers in the Church, considered meerly as such, are none of the King's Ministers, but Servants of Christ, and Ministers of the Church, not Officers of the State. And because, in the Primitive Church, Ministers used to be constituted by Χειροτονίαν, or by the Suffrages of the Christians, the Prince may lawfully claim his Vote in the same Church whereof he is a Member; But as for the other Churches under his Jurisdiction, they ought to be left to their free Choice, exept there be some prevailing Reasons, which oblige the Prince to interpose his Authority; it being unjust, that a Minister should be put upon a Church against their Will, if they can alledge any lawful Exception against him. For, a Teacher thus forced upon his Auditors, for whom they have neither esteem nor Love, is likely to edifie but little by his Doctrine. Nevertheless, Sovereigns ought to have a watch-

watchful Eye over the Churches, and to take care that Persons not fitly qualified for this sacred Function, may not be promoted to the Ministry either by Simony or other unlawful Means: For though it is the Interest of the whole Church to provide against these Corruptions, Sovereigns are likely to do it with much better Success than can be expected from private Persons. They may authorise certain Persons to be present at these Elections, and who, by their Authority, may prevent all manner of Disorder or Corruption, and at the same time make a due enquiry, whether such Persons as are to be put into the Ministry are of an approved Life and Doctrine. And, because the Ministers of the Church do sometimes act negligently or preposterously in their Office, which often proves the Occasion of Scandal and Schism in the Church, Sovereigns may constitute over them Inspectors, with an Authority to reprove, and sometimes to punish such as transgress their Rules. But these Inspectors, being no less subject to human Frailties than other men, Care ought to be taken that their Authority be so limited as to be accountable of all their Proceedings, either to the Prince, or before a Consistory authorised for that purpose, if they transgress their Bounds or trespass upon the Ministers of the Church. As all these maters do contribute to the maintaining of good Order in the Church, and may best be put in execution by the Sovereign Authority; So it is manifest, that Princes, as they are chief Members of the Church, may justly

1 Tim. 3. 13.

Rom. 16. 17.

claim

claim this Prerogative as properly belonging to their high Station and Princely Office.

Concerning the Right of calling together a Synod.

§. 46. In case of any Difference or Controversie concerning any Point of Doctrine which may sometimes arise in the Church, so, that the Teachers are divided in their Opinions, it belongs to the Sovereign Authority to take care that these Differences may be composed, not only as the Sovereign is a Member of the Church, but as he is the Supream Head of the Commonwealth; It having been frequently observed, that Differences of Opinions and Animosities of the Parties concerned,, cause great Commotions in the State. Upon such Occasions Sovereigns have a Right to call together an Assembly of the most able Divines, and to authorise them to examine the Controversie, and to determine it according to the Tenure of the Scriptures; The Supream Direction of this Assembly ought to be managed by the Prince's Authority; For, since it can scarce be supposed that matters should be transacted there without Heats and Animosities, it will be both for the Honour and Interest of this Assembly, if by the Presence of certain Persons well versed in Business, these Heats be allayed, and matters carried on with an equal Temperament. Neither do I see how any one besides the Prince can lay claim to this Power of calling such an Assembly; for, put the case, that one Party should refuse to appear, and to submit unto the other's Direction, which way will they be able to compel them to it? And who is it, that can with less

Difficulty

Difficulty put in execution the Decrees of such a Synod, than he, who has the Sovereign Power in his Hands? Tho' at the same time it ought not to be forgotten, that this Power must not extend it self beyond its due Bounds, but be suitable to the Genius of the Christian Religion. But, in case Divines out of other Countries are to be called unto this Convocation or Assembly, it is, I think, a plain case, that these cannot appear there without leave first obtained from their Sovereigns. And if a Council should be called, consisting of selected Divines out of a great many Commonwealths, this cannot be done without a foregoing Agreement made betwixt those Sovereigns that are concerned therein. For it is not allowable for Subjects of another State to come to us upon such an Account, nor can ours go to them upon such an Errand, unless by joint Consent of the higher Powers. And since Sovereigns cannot claim any Jurisdiction over one another, there will be no place left for any Prerogative, but Matters must be transacted according to mutual Contract.

Their Right concerning Church-Discipline.

§. 47. For what Reasons the Primitive Christians did introduce Church Discipline, *viz.* to be distinguished from the Heathens by their holy Life and Conversation, and to supply the Defects of the civil Pagan Laws, which did not restrain them from such Vices as were abominable to the Christians, has been sufficiently explained before. This Reason takes no more place now, after whole Commonwealths as well as their Sovereigns are

entred

entred into the Communion of the Christian Church; for there is not the same Occasion now to be distinguished from the Heathens by an unspotted Conversation, after the rooting out of the Pagan Religion, all Christians being under an equal Obligation to endeavour an unblemished Life. But, notwithstanding the general Conversion of whole Commonwealths to the Christian Faith, care ought to be taken, that Holiness of Life be not laid aside among Christians; from whence arises this Question: Whether it be better to make use of the antient Church Discipline now, in the same manner as it was practised in the Primitive times? Or, whether it be not more expedient to admit of some Alterations, after Sovereigns are entred into the Communion of the Church? The last of these two seems to be most probable; because this antient Church Discipline which was introduced for a certain time, to supply the deficiency of the Pagan Laws, and to amend their vicious Lives and Conversation, and was thus left to the direction of certain People, is not an Essential part of Christianity; and, besides this, carries this Inconveniency along with it, that it may easily degenerate into a kind of a pretended Soveraignty, and prove prejudicial to the Civil Power. And, as Soveraigns have a Right to provide against every thing that may be the probable cause of Convulsions in the State; so may this defect be supplied by the Civil Laws, and Vices may be suppressed by Civil Punishments. Neither do I see any reason to the contrary, why

Vices

Vices ſhould not be as eaſily corrected by Puniſhments preſcribed by the Civil Laws, as by Church-Cenſures; or, why the firſt ſhould not prove as effectual as the latter for the ſuppreſſing of Publick Scandals? It will perhaps be objected, That Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline has a much greater Influence over Chriſtians towards the amendment of their Lives, than Civil Puniſhments; becauſe the firſt penetrates into the Heart; whereas Civil Puniſhments do not touch us but ſuperficially: Unto this it may be anſwered, That Church-Diſcipline does not always anſwer this end, it being not to be doubted, but that ſome Men, tho' they undergo all the Church-Penances, retain in their hearts the ſame vicious Inclinations, or ſometimes grow more ſtubborn and bold. But if it be taken as an Expiation for our Sins in regard of God Almighty, it is to be obſerved, that if we pretend to an Expiation for any Treſpaſſes, which fall under the cognizance of Humane Laws, we muſt therein be directed by the Word of Gōd, which does not preſcribe Church-Penance as a proper Satisfaction in this caſe. For our ſins are not remitted, becauſe we have undergone Church-Penance, but becauſe our Hearts are purified by the Blood of Chriſt, provided we, by the Faith, apply his Sufferings unto us. But, ſuppoſing it ſhould be thought moſt convenient, that ſome ſort of Vices ought to be corrected by Church-Diſcipline, the beſt Expedient would be, to leave it firſt to the determination of the Civil Judges, who, according to the Circumſtances of the Caſe, ought to ſend the Delinquents

to

to the Eccleſiaſtical Court, there to undergo the Church-Cenſure. For, Chriſtian Soveraigns have an unqueſtionable Right to determine, what ſort of Miſdemeanors are puniſhable by the Civil Laws, and which of them come under the Cognizance of Eccleſiaſtical Courts; and conſequently, to decree, what ſort of Church-Cenſure ought to be laid upon the Delinquents, according to the different Nature of the Treſpaſs; which may be put in Execution by the Miniſters accordingly. Concerning Excommunication, the ſame ought not to be put in Practice, but with this caution, that it ought not to be left to the diſcretion of Prieſts, ſo as to be inflicted by them at pleaſure; but this Power ought to be limited by certain Rules preſcribed by thoſe that have the Legiſlative Power in a State. For, in a Chriſtian Commonwealth Excommunication alters the Civil Condition of a Subject, and renders him infamous and deteſtable among his fellow-Chriſtians: And as it affects the Civil State of Subjects, Soveraigns, unleſs they will let others encroach upon their Prerogative, ought to determine concerning its Legality.

Concerning the Power of making Eccleſiaſtical Canons or Statutes.

§. 48. Since the Chriſtian Religion does not in any wiſe diminiſh the Rights of Soveraigns, theſe, if entred into the Communion of the Church, have a Power to examine, what Canons or Eccleſiaſtical Statutes are received in the Church; and if ſome of them are found ſuperfluous, or interfering with the Soveraign Power, to aboliſh the ſame; and if there appears any deficiency, to ſupply what is wanting

ing towards the maintaining a good Order, and the Glory of the Church (which however, ought not to be done without the Advice, at leaſt, of the chief Men of the Church) and laſtly, give to thoſe Statutes the force of Civil Laws. This Power nevertheleſs, of making Eccleſiaſtical Statutes, muſt be exerciſed with a great deal of caution, the ſame being limited to the outward form of the Church-Government, and to maintain its Order and Decency, Chriſtians being not to be over-heap'd with a vaſt number of Canons. For, thoſe that ſtretch the Power of Soveraigns to ſuch a pitch, as to make them the abſolute Judges of the Chriſtian Religion, and to attribute to them a Right of eſtabliſhing certain Articles of Faith by Civil Laws, or to annex to them a force equal to the Civil Conſtitutions, and to force upon their Subjects a certain Religion, under ſevere Penalties, or oblige them either to profeſs or to deny certain Points of Doctrine, which are controverted amongſt Chriſtians; Theſe, I ſay, act quite contrary to the true Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, and to the Method made uſe of by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, for the propagating of this Doctrine; They deſtroy the very Eſſential part of our Faith, which being a Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, and a Belief founded in our Hearts, is tranſmuted into an outward Confeſſion, where the Tongue, to avoid Temporal Puniſhment, is forced to ſpeak thoſe things which are in no wiſe agreeable to the Heart. This however admits again of a Limitation; For herein are not comprehended theſe Points, which proceeding

Coloſ. 2. 16. 21, 22. 1 Tim. 4. 3 4.

from

from Natural Religion, are alſo contained in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and all of them imply a profound Reverence to be paid to the Supream BEING. For, it is beyond all queſtion, that thoſe that act againſt the very Dictates of Reaſon, ought to be ſubject to Civil Puniſhments, ſince they ſtrike at the very Foundation of Civil Societies: Such are Idolatry, Blaſphemy, Profanation of the Sabbath; where nevertheleſs great care is to be taken, that a due difference be made betwixt the Moral part of that Precept concerning the Sabbath, which is unalterable, and the Ceremonial part of it. Princes therefore at their firſt entrance into the Communion of the Chriſtian Church, might Lawfully deſtroy the Images and Temples of the Idols, and the Groves, and other Meeting-places dedicated to their ſuperſtitious Worſhip. Neither can it be called in queſtion, but that Chriſtian Soveraigns have a Right to inflict Civil Puniſhments upon ſuch as revile the whole Syſtem of the Chriſtian Religion, and ridicule the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Faith, at leaſt, they may Baniſh them the Country. But for the reſt, it is in vain to believe, that the true enlightning of our Mind, and the inward conſent to ſuch Articles of Faith as ſurpaſs our Underſtanding, can be procured by violent means, or temporal puniſhments. For, ſuppoſing you force a Man to diſſemble his thoughts, to ſpeak contrary to what he conceives in his own Opinion, let his Confeſſion be never ſo formal, and his Geſtures never ſo well compoſed and conformable to certain preſcribed

Rules,

Rules, this has not the leaſt affinity with true Religion, unleſs he at the ſame time does feel an inward motion, and hearty compliance with what he profeſſes. Neither ought People, according to the true Genius of the Doctrine of Chriſt, be enticed to receive the Chriſtian Religion, by Temporal Intereſt, Honours, or other ſuch like Advantages; for, Chriſt did promiſe, that thoſe that followed him, ſhould receive their Reward in the Life to come, but fore-told them nothing but Croſſes and Tribulations in this. And, thoſe that embrace any Religion out of a Motive of Temporal Advantages, do plainly ſhew, that they have a greater Value for their own Intereſt, than Religion. And certainly, ſcarce any body, that has but common ſenſe, can perſwade himſelf, that ſuch a ſort of Worſhip can be pleaſing to God Almighty. Sovereigns being not conſtituted for Religion's ſake, they cannot under that colour exact from their Subjects a blind Obedience in matters of Religion, it being unqueſtionable, that if Subjects ſhould blindfold follow the Religion of their Sovereign, they cannot by all his Authority be aſſured of their Salvation; from whence it is evident, that, in caſe any Subject be fully convinced, that he can out of the Holy Scripture diſcover any Errors, which are crept into the Church, even that by Law eſtabliſhed (eſpecially concerning any Principal Point of Faith) he neither can, nor ought to be hindered in his deſign by the Sovereign Authority, before his Reaſons be heard, and well debated in the preſence of

the beſt and ableſt Judges; and, if by them he be legally and plainly convicted of his Error, then, and not before, ought he to be ſilenced. To force People into the Church by the bare Civil Authority, muſt needs fill the Commonwealth with Hypocrites, who cannot be ſuppoſed to Act according to the Dictates of their Conſciences. For, ſince in Religious Matters an abſolute Uniformity betwixt the Heart and Tongue is required, how can it otherwiſe be, but that ſuch as profeſs a Religion diſagreeable to their Opinion, ſhould never be ſatisfied in their Conſciences, when they conſider, that they impoſe upon God Almighty.

What Prerogatives belong to Sovereigns, as being Protectors of the Publick Tranquility.

§. 49. The Care of preſerving the Publick Peace, belonging in a moſt peculiar manner to Sovereigns, has furniſhed ſome with a ſpecious Pretence to affirm, that ſince differences in Religion cauſe frequent Convulſions in the State, and it is to be deemed one of the greateſt Happineſſes of a Government, if its Subjects, in general, are of one Religion, all means, tho' never ſo violent, may be put in execution to extirpate theſe Differences in Religion. They alledge, that as much more precious our Souls are before our Bodies, the more Sovereigns are obliged to be watchful over them; and, that the true Love which a Sovereign bears to his Subjects, can never be more conſpicuous, than when he takes effectual care of their Salvation. Theſe, it muſt be confeſs'd, are very ſpecious Pretences, and have ſometimes had ſuch powerful influence over Princes, who were elſe naturally not inclined to Severity,

rity, that they have nevertheleſs by theſe plauſible Arguments been prevailed upon to aſſiſt with their Authority the cruel Deſigns of Prieſts. It will therefore not be beyond our ſcope, to make a ſtrict Enquiry what account ought to be made of theſe ſo ſpecious Reaſons in a well conſtituted Government. In the firſt place then, it is to be conſidered, that it has been foretold by our Saviour, that there ſhould always be in the Church Weeds amongſt the Wheat; that is to ſay, that there ſhould be falſe Doctrines raiſed in the Church; and theſe, according to the Commands of our Saviour, were not to be extirpated Root and Branch, but to be reſerved for the Day of Judgment. For a Sovereign that takes to ſuch violent courſes, may make a havock among his Subjects, which commonly proves equally pernicious to the Innocent and Guilty; nevertheleſs, he will find it impracticable quite to abolish all Errors and Differences in the Church. Never did any body ſhew a greater Love to Mankind than our Saviour, who ſacrificed himſelf for our Salvation; Yet he made uſe of no other ways to propagate his Doctrine, than Teaching, when he might have commanded Twelve Legions of Angels to force Mankind to Obedience. How can a Prince be eſteemed to follow the Foot-ſteps of Chriſt, who makes ſuch profligate Wretches as the Dragoons his Apoſtles, for the Converſion of his Subjects? That Pretence of the Love of Sovereigns toward their Subjects, let it be never ſo ſpecious, he ought not under that colour endeavour to ſubvert or alter

the Method of propagating the Christian Doctrine, according to the true Genius of the Christian Religion. Besides this, it is not absolutely necessary to maintain the Publick Tranquility, that all the Subjects in general should be of one Religion, or, which is the same in effect, the differences about some Points in Religion, considered barely as such, are not the true causes of Disturbances in a State; but the Heats and Animosities, Ambition and perverted Zeal of some, who make these Differences their Tools, wherewith they often raise Disturbances in the State. Such turbulent Spirits ought to be curbed, and care to be taken so to tye up their Hands, as that they want Power to influence the Minds of such Subjects, as otherwise would be well satisfied, to enjoy peaceably a Liberty of Conscience. And what should move a Prince to disturb his good Subjects meerly upon the score of Differences in Opinion, as long as they live quietly under his Goverment? For, supposing their Opinion to be erroneous, it is not at his, but their own Peril, and they alone must be answerable for it. For, in my Opinion, Sovereigns are entrusted with the Sword, wherewith to dissect Controversies, as *Alexander* did with the *Gordian* Knot. But, that it may not be objected as if I intended to encourage all sorts of Heresies and Licentiousness, I do declare, that this is far different from my purpose, but that on the contrary, it is to be wished, and ought to be endeavoured, to procure but one Faith and Religion in a State, and especially such a one as is absolutely

agreeable

agreeable to the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, contained in the Holy Scripture; such a one as cannot but contrbute towards the maintaining of the Publick Tranquility. For, I do not think, that all Uniformity in Religion is equally capable of procuring that Union; neither can the Pagan Religion, *Mahometans*, *Arians*, *Anabaptists*, and that of *Antichrist* himself, claim that Prerogative, but only the true and antient Religion contained in the Holy Scripture. For, this is only to be deemed the truly Antient Religion, which is derived from the pure and genuine Spring of the Primitive Christian Religion. As among the *Jews*, such only could boast to follow the true foot-steps of Antiquity, as proved their Doctrine out of the Books of *Moses*. All what degenerates from the Nature of its genuine Spring, tho' back'd by the Traditions of some Ages, being only to be look'd upon as an inveterate Error. Princes being then Protectors of the Publick Tranquility, have an Authority to inspect what Canons are received into the Church, and to cause them to be examined according to the true Tenure of the Holy Scripture; and this care is not to be committed to the management of a few, who may perhaps be swayed by Faction or Interest, but to all such as have a solid knowledge of the Holy Scripture. If every thing be found consonant to its Rules, then may a Sovereign by his Authority Command this Doctrine to be Taught both in publick and private. But where there is not any Publick Form of Religion established in a Commonwealth, it is the

Sovereign's care, that one may be composed by the assistance of such as are well versed in the Holy Scripture, which being approved of by the general consent of his Subjects, ought to be professed by all, and all those especially, who pretend to the Ministry, are to be tyed up to its Rules. This form of Worship being once received, , a Prince may justly deny his Peotection to all such as will not comply with it, unless he find it to be against the Common Interest of the Commonweal. If any one should undertake to contradict this Publick Form, especially in such Points as are the Heads of the Christian Religion, he ought to be admonished to desist, his Reasons, if he has any, to be examined, and when convicted of his Error, to be silenced; if all this prove fruitless, he may lawfully be banished. For, since, according to the Doctrine of the Apostles, we are to avoid the Conversation of Hereticks, it would be unreasonable that a whole Society of Men should fly from one or a few capricious Persons; So that he or they ought to seek out for a new Habitation, after they have been legally convicted of their Error; for fear they should spread their erroneous Doctrines further than may be consistent with the Publick Safety. But we allow no other Punishment in such a case, except their Doctrine should amount to Blasphemy.

Concerning Tolerating of several Religions in a State

§. 50. Notwithstanding what has been alledg'd there may be such a juncture of Time & Circumstances, that Sovereigns may, nay ought with a safe Conscience to tolerate such of their Subjects

jects as are of a different Opinion from the Eſtabliſhed Religion. For, it may ſo happen, that the number of the Diſſenters is ſo great, as not to be expelled without great Prejudice to the State, and, not without danger to the Commonwealth, if they ſhould ſettle under another Government. For that common Saying of a certain Sort of Men, that 'tis better to have a Country lie waſte, than to have it inhabited by Hereticks, ſavours of Barbarity, if not Inhumanity. And a certain Prince who ſaid, that he would rather walk out of his Territories with nothing but a Staff in his hands, than to ſuffer it to be inhabited by Hereticks, may well paſs for one of the moſt bigotted Zealots in Chriſtendom. For the Doctrine of the Goſpel is not deſtructive to civil Society, neither is thereby the leaſt Obligation laid upon Princes, to propagate Religion by violent and deſtructive means, or to undertake more in that behalf, than belongs to them as Protectors of the publick Tranquility; they may therefore with a ſafe Conſcience ſupercede ſuch violent ways, by which the State either is endangered or weakned; eſpecially, ſince neither our Saviour did make uſe of them himſelf, nor commanded any thing like it to his Apoſtles. On the other hand, thoſe that expect to be tolerated in a State, ought by all means to endeavour to live peaceably and quietly, and as becomes good Subjects, they ought not to Teach any Doctrine which ſavours of Sedition and Diſobedience, or to ſuffer ſuch Principles to be fomented in their Congregations, as may prove deſtructive to the Prerogatives of their Sove-

reigns. For, there is not the leaſt queſtion to be made, but Princes have a right to rout out ſuch as propagate theſe Doctrines, they having not the leaſt relation to Religion, but are like ſpots, wherewith ſome turbulent Heads beſpatter the Chriſtian Religion. Beſides this, there is another duty incumbent to Sovereigns over a State, where more than one Religion is tolerated; *viz.* to keep a watchful eye over them, that the Diſſenting Parties do not break out into extravagant Expreſſions about the Differences in Religion, theſe being the Fuel that enflames them into Animoſities, which oftentimes prove the ſpring of Factions, Troubles, and inteſtine Commotions. A much greater Obligation lies upon Sovereigns to tolerate Diſſenters, if they, when they firſt ſubmitted to the Government, had their Liberty of Conſcience granted them by Contract; or have obtain'd it afterwards by certainCapitulations, any following Statutes, or by the fundmental Laws of the Land; all which ought to be ſacred to Princes, and to be obſerved by them with the ſame Circumſpection, as they expect a due Obedience from their Subjects. No Opinion concerning matter of Religion ought to be declared Erroneous, before it be duely examined, and the Parties convicted, eſpecially if they are ready to prove the ſame out of the Fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Faith; And great care is to be taken that ſuch a Deciſion be not left to the Management of their Adverſaries, who being perhaps guided by ſelf Intereſt, oftentimes are both Accuſers and Judges. There are not a few Politicians, who

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are of opinion, that Sovereigns may with a safe Conscience give Protection to their Subjects, tho' of an erroneous Opinion, provided it be for the benefit of the Commonwealth; especially if care be taken, that they do not draw away others into the same Error. For, supposing the established Religion both in point of Doctrine and Morality, to excel all others, it is to be hoped that the Dissenting Parties may be in time brought over to it, rather than to be feared, that they should seduce others; Besides, that it may contribute to the encrease of the Zeal and Learning of the established Clergy, it being sufficiently proved by Experience, that in those places and times, where and when no Religious Differences were in agitation, the Clergy soon degenrated into Idleness and Barbarity.

Sovereigns in matters of Religion ought not to be misguided by Flatterers.

§. 51. Furthermore, as Sovereigns in all other Matters of Moment ought to act with great Circumspection; so, especially in matters of Religion, they cannot proceed with too much caution, an injustice of this nature, being the most sensible of all that can be done to a Subject. For what can be more abominable, than to let Subjects suffer unjustly for their Faith in Christ, and that perhaps for no other reason, but, because some others out of self Interest, cannot agree with them in Opinion. And, if a Prince, who prompted by his own cruel Inclinations tyrannises over his Subjects, is odious to all the World, how much more abominable appears a Prince, who acts the part of an Executioner, and is made an Instrument by others to fulfil their cruel

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Designs against their Fellow Subjects? All Christian Princes therefore, as they tender their Consciences, ought to avoid all manner of Extreamities in Matters of this Nature, which ought never to be undertaken, unless they be well instructed beforehand in every particular Point. A Prince ought not only to be satisfyed with, or rely entirely on what is represented to him by his Clergy, (tho' never so pious in outward appearance;) there being too many Instances to be given, that the best of Princes, by their own Inclinations, abhorring all manner of Cruelty, have, by the Instigation of over-zealous Clergy-Men, turn'd the most cruel Tyrants: We scarce ever read of any Prince, who undertook to decide Controversies in Physick, or other Sciences (except he had attained to a particular Knowledge in these Matters) and, why should Sovereigns be too forward in deciding Religious Differences, which are of much greater Moment, (the eternal and temporal welfare of Millions of People do depend thereon) unless they be very well instructed in every thing that has any relation to it? And, since Princes very rarely bestow sufficient Time and Pains in being fully instructed in Divinity, it is to be wished, that they would be byassed by their own natural Understanding, rather than be influenc'd by the Opinions of others. As for an Instance, in those Controversies which are betwixt the *Protestants* and *Papists*, there are such evident Signs, from whence it is a difficult matter for a Christian Prince to discern, which of these two ought to be preferred before the other.

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For, if it be considered, that the *Protestants* are so far from forbidding the reading of the holy Scripture to the Laity, that on the contrary, they exhort them to it, and make the Scriptures the Touchstone of their Doctrine, and the true Judge of their Controversies; That the *Protestants*, trusting upon the goodness of their own Cause, do not forbid the reading of *Popish* Authors, but allow them to be publickly sold, as being confident, that the weakness of their Arguments cannot have any influence, even over an indifferent Understanding; it cannot but seem very strange, why in the Church of *Rome*, the Laity is not allowed the reading of the holy Scripture, nay, that they leave no stone unturn'd, to suppress the Validity of the holy Scripture; so, that in those places where the Inquisition is in vogue, a Man may with less danger be guilty of Blasphemy, Perjury, and other the most enormous Crimes, than to read and examine the Mysteries of the holy Scripture. On the other hand, what a clamour do they make about Traditions, and the Prerogatives of the Church, which Title they claim as belonging, in a most peculiar manner to themselves, and notwithstanding the same is not allowed them by others, they assume to themselves the Authority of giving Judgment in their own Cause. It is very well worth the Consideration of a Prince, that they will not allow our Books to be read among them, and especially, how careful they are in keeping them from the Knowledge of Great Men, tho' belonging to the Communion of their Church. Who is

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ſo ignorant as not to know, what great Difficulties and Obſtacles were to be ſurmounted before it could be obtained, that the *Augſburgh* Confeſſion was read to the Emperour *Charles* V. All which, taken together, are moſt evident Proofs to any unbyaſſed Perſon, that the *Proteſtants* act like Men, as relying upon the goodneſs of their Cauſe; but the *Roman Catholicks*, as miſtruſting themſelves, and fearing, that if their Doctrine ſhould be examined, according to the Tenure of the holy Scripture, and out of the *Proteſtant* Wrttings, the ſame would ſcarce bear the Touchſtone. It may alſo be taken into conſideration, how far different the Intereſt of the *Roman Catholicks* Party is from that of the *Proteſtants*: For, tho' both Parties with equal Zeal in Publick pretend to the Honour of God, and the Truth of the Goſpel; and it is not to be denied, but that a great many among the *Roman Catholicks*, are very Zealous for the ſame; nevertheleſs, if we duely conſider the Nature of Mankind in general, it may eaſily be ſuppoſed, that they aim at ſomething more; And, what this ſomething is, is eaſily diſcernable, if we make a due compariſon betwixt the Clergy of both Parties. Among the *Proteſtants*, the greateſt part of the Clergy are ſo ſtinted in their Revenues, as to give them no opportunity of living in State; what Reſpect is paid them, is on the account of their Function as being Teachers, their power very ſeldom reaches beyond their Revenues, which are very moderate, and oftentimes very mean. Both their Perſons and Eſtates depend from the Authority of their

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Sovereigns, neither have they any where elſe to ſeek for Protection. On the contrary, in what Pomp and affluence of Fortune does the *Popiſh* Clergy live! Unto what height have they not exalted their Power in *Europe*! Have they not ſo ordered their Matters, as to be almoſt independant from the Civil Magiſtrates? What likelihood can there be in all this, that the *Proteſtants* ſhould be as much concerned for a Temporal By-Intereſt as the *Popiſh* Clergy? For, whereas, they firſt can expect no more than what is alloted them already, the latter have no leſs in view than vaſt Riches, and the Poſſeſſions of whole Kingdoms. All theſe Matters duely conſidered, may be convincing Proofs, that all the Clamour which the *Popiſh* Clergy makes againſt the *Proteſtants*, is of the ſame nature with that of *Demetrius* at *Epheſus*, when he exclaimed againſt St. *Paul*, Love and Meekneſs being the products of the Chriſtian Faith; the Cruelties of the *Popiſh* Clergy exerciſed againſt *Proteſtants*, ought to be ſuſpected by Princes, and ſerve them as a forewarning; what good is to be expected from thoſe that proſecute with ſo much Barbarity all ſuch, as oppoſe their Pride and Ambition? After the Perſecutions were ceaſed in the Primitive Church, the *Arians* were the firſt, who ſhew'd their teeth to the Chriſtians; But they would have bluſhed for ſhame, if they ſhould have attempted to propagate their Religion by force of Arms, and ſuch other cruel Perſecutions as are now in vogue among the *Popiſh* Clergy. If we were not ſufficiently convinced, that the Spirit of Envy is not the

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Spirit of Christ; we may be instructed as to this Point by our Saviour himself (when Luk. 9. 54, 55, 56. he rebuked *James* and *John*, who would have fire come down from Heaven) in these words: *Ye know not, what manner of Spirit you are of; For the Son of Man is not come to destroy Mens lives, but to save them.* The Sword of Christ is not girted on the side of Men, Rev. 19. 15. but goes out of his Mouth, and in all the holy Scripture, there is not one passage, where the Church of Christ is said to be drunken with the Blood of Hereticks; but it is said of Rev. 17. 6. the Whore of *Babylon*, that *she is drunken with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Christ.*

Sovereigns are often encroached upon in their rights under a religious pretext.

§. 52. Lastly, Since Sovereigns ought to be jealous of their own Prerogatives, they may without Injustice make an Enquiry, whether the Protestant or the Popish Religion be most encroaching upon their Authority, and which of these two be most consistent with the Civil Government. For whenever the Civil Power bears any diminution under a Religious Pretence, it is then high time for Sovereigns to look about them, to examine upon what Foundation these Pretensions are built; it being evident, that Civil Goverment was introduced before the Christian Religion, and that therefore it ought plainly to be demonstrated, how Civil Authority came to be diminished by the Christian Religion. Now, if we look into the Constitution of the Popish Clergy, it is manifest, that by many steps and degrees, and by various Artifices and Intrigues, they have at last patch'd up a Potent State of their own;

own; and that their Supream Head, for these many Ages past, is possess'd of great Territories, and Acts as a Sovereign; and, not only this, but also obtrudes his Authority upon all such as profess the *Roman* Catholick Religion. For, they don't think it sufficient that the whole Clergy have their dependance from him, but he pretends to an Absolute Authority of determining all Matters of Faith, by which means he is sure to guide the Minds of the People where ever he pleases. If any thing in the World is destructive to the Civil Powers, it must of necessity be this, when a Party inhabiting their Territories, disown their Jurisdiction and depending from a Foreign Power; deny the Authority of their Natural Prince over them, or at least acknowledge it no longer than they think it convenient. If Neighbouring States are commonly the most jealous of one another, must it not be look'd upon as a great Solocism of State, to permit such as depend from a Foreign Jurisdiction to abide in the Commonwealth? It is next door to take Foreign Garisons into our Forts, or to allow a Foreign Force to Encamp in the midst of our Dominions. And this Mischief seems to be the more pernicious, when the Revenues, by which the Grandeur of this Ecclesiastical State is maintained, are squeezed out of the Subjects of any Prince, and the best part of his Territories exhausted; whereas on the contrary, these Leeches are not only freed from all manner of Taxes, but also pretend to a Legislative Authority, so as to inflict Punishments upon the Subjects, and to Absolve them

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from their Allegiance due to their Sovereigns. I cannot see how Princes, without great Prejudice to the Commonweal, can allow the least Authority over their Persons, to the Clergy; For, if the Prince and they happen to jarr together, the poor Subjects pay for it with a Vengeance, when they are to serve two Masters of a contrary side at one time; and the Taxes must fall the heavier upon the Subjects, where the Clergy are exempted from all Contributions. Lastly, is it not a heavy Burthen to the Subjects, to be subject both to an Ecclesiastical and Temporal Jurisdiction? The former being generally the most severe; as is most evident in *Spain* and *Italy*, where the Courts of Inquisition are in vogue. It being therefore beyond all question, that all these things are practised by the *Roman* Catholicks, but in no wise by the Protestants, such Princes, as, being misled by the Popish Clergy, endeavour to extirpate their Protestant Subjects, Act not only contrary to Justice, but even against the very Dictates of right Reason. What has been objected by some, *viz.* That Protestants have not been altogether free from the imputation of raising Disturbances in the State, and having joined with a Foreign Power, scarce deserves an Answer; For, this is not to be imputed to Religion it self, bnt rather, to some dangerous Juncture, and other Circumstances, which often prove the occasion of dangerous Commotions in a State; Or else, the Papists have first begun the Dance, and what Wonder is it, if some Protestants, to avoid their cruel

Designs,

Deſigns againſt them, have endeavoured to repel the Fury of their Adverſaries; and when they found themſelves inſufficient, have ſought for Aid by Foreign Princes. For, as it is the greateſt piece of Injuſtice to compel Subjects by force of Arms to any Religion, ſo theſe may juſtly defend their Religion by force of Arms, eſpecially if they live under a Government where they have a Right belonging to them of Protecting their Liberties againſt any Invaders.

§. 53. Laſt of all, it very well deſerves to make an Enquiry who it is that has the Power in the Commonwealth to amend ſuch Errors and Abuſes, as are crept into the Church, either in Point of Doctrine, Morality, or Church-Government? Or, which turns to the ſame Account, who has the Right of Reformation? Where firſt of all it is unqueſtionable, that there is no occaſion of a Reformation, where the Clergy, upon Admonition, deſiſt from theſe Abuſes; like as when a Creditor, upon Summons, is paid by his Debtor, ought to ſupercede his Action againſt him. But, put the caſe, that the Clergy either abſolutely refuſe, or from time to time protract to deſiſt from ſuch Abuſes, ſo that there is but two ways left to be choſen; either patiently to ſubmit to their capricious Humour, or elſe certain Perſons in the State, being damnified by theſe Abuſes, have a Right and Power to controul their Extravagancies. Thoſe that maintain the firſt Poſition, muſt prove, that the Clergy has been inveſted with ſuch an unlimited Power by God Almighty, to impoſe

Concerning the Right of Reformation.

upon Christians, even the most absurd Matters, at pleasure, without being liable to be controuled by any Power upon Earth; Or, they must demonstrate, that Christians have absolutely submitted their Faith to the Clergy, and that in such a manner, that every thing which should be ordained by them, should be received for Truth with all imaginable submission and patience. But, because it would favour of too much Impudence to pretend to the first, it lies then at their Door to prove, that the Clergy, and their Supream Head, did never err, either in Point of Doctrine, Ceremonies, or Church-Government; All which having been sufficiently demonstrated to the contrary, by the consent of several Christian Nations. We are of Opinion, that when any Abuses are crept into the Church, which are prejudicial to the Commonwealth, or the Authority of Sovereigns, these, by vertue of their Sovereign Right and Prerogative, have a Power to abolish and reform all such matters as interfere with the Publick Good and Civil Authority. At the same time, it cannot be denyed, but that in a case of such moment it may be very convenient to acquaint the People with the Reasons of such a Reformation, lest they should be surprized at it, and look upon it as an Innovation, which might prove of dangerous consequence. And, if especially, the Rights of the People are invaded by these Abuses, this Reformation ought to be undertaken with the knowledge and approbation of the Subjects. It may be objected, that by such a Reformation Divisions are raised

raiſed in the Church. But this is to be look'd upon as a matter of no great Weight; ſuch a Diviſion being not to be imputed to thoſe that rectifie ſuch Errors, but to thoſe that obſtinately refuſe to return into the right Path, either out of Self-intereſt or Pride. There is nothing more obvious out of the antient Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, than that ſuch as were plainly convicted of an Error, uſed to be excluded from the Communion of the Church. But ſuch as begin a Reformation upon a good and legal Account, can under no Colour whatſoever be accuſed of Schiſm or Rebellion. For, thoſe are Rebels, who by forcible Ways endeavour to withdraw themſelves from the Allegiance due to their lawful Sovereign: Whereas all ſuch as free themſelves from Abuſes unjuſtly impoſed upon them, without their own conſent, or any Divine Authority, rather deſerve to be ſtiled defenders of their own Liberty and Conſcience; eſpecially, if theſe Abuſes and Errors are dangerous to their Souls. For, no Teacher, no Biſhop, no Convention whatſoever, was ever inveſted with an abſolute Power of domineering over Chriſtians at pleaſure, ſo that no Remedy ſhould be left againſt their Uſurpation. It cannot therefore but be look'd upon as a great piece of Impudence in the *Roman Catholick* Party, when they aſſume to themſelves wholly and entirely the Title of the Church, with excluſion to all others, that are not of the ſame Communion. For, they either muſt pretend their Church to be the Univerſal, or elſe a particular Church. By the Univerſal Church, is, according to the

Tenure of the Holy Scripture, underſtood the whole multitude of the Believers, whereſoever diſperſed in the World, whoſe Union conſiſts in this, That they acknowledge one God, one Redeemer, one Baptiſm, one Faith and Eternal Salvation; from whence only are excluded ſuch as pretend to diſſolve this Union; that is, who deny the true God, and his Son Chriſt, and who do not agree with the very Fundamental Principles of the Chriſtian Religion. This is the true Catholick Church, not the Pope with his Eccleſiaſticks and Ceremonies, who impoſe their Authority upon Chriſtendom. And, ſince thoſe that, for weighty Reaſons have withdrawn themſelves from the Church of *Rome*, may and do believe a true Baptiſm, a true God and Father, a Faith agreeable to the Holy Scripture, it is evident that the *Roman* Church is not to be taken for the Univerſal Church; and that a Chriſtian may be a Member of the true Catholick Church, in a right ſenſe, notwithſtanding that he never was in the Communion of the *Roman* Church, or, upon better Conſideration, has freed himſelf from its Abuſes and Errors. But the Popiſh Religion, conſidered as a particular Church, as it ought to be, (tho', if we unravel the bottom of its modern Conſtitution, it will eaſily appear, that the whole frame of that Church is not ſo much adapted to the Rules of a Chriſtian Congregation, as to a Temporal State; where, under a Religious pretext, the chief aim is to extend its Sovereignty over the greateſt part of *Europe*) thoſe, that have withdrawn themſelves from that Com-

Communion, are no more to be counted Rebels, than our Modern Philoſophers are to be taken for Fools and Madmen, becauſe they differ in Opinion from *Ariſtotle*. For, all Believers, who adhere to the true Faith, are, in regard of their Head Jeſus Chriſt, of an equal degree, and aim all at the ſame End. And Chriſt having given this Promiſe to all Believers; *That where two or three were gathered together in his Name, there would he be in the midſt of them*; no Church can claim any Prerogative by reaſon of the number of its Adherents. What the *Romaniſts* alledge for themſelves out of the Apoſtolical Creed, is ſo full of abſurdity, that it contradicts it ſelf, *viz.* out of theſe words: *I believe one Holy, Catholick, and Apoſtolical Church*; For, except they could cajole us into a belief that theſe words imply as much as to ſay: There is but one true Church upon Earth, which is the *Roman Catholick*, there being no other beſides that, I cannot ſee what Inference can be drawn from thence to their Advantage; Beſides, that the very ſenſe of the words contradict this Interpretation, if Reaſon, the Holy Scripture, and Experience it ſelf did not ſufficiently convince us to the contrary. It is beyond contradiction, that there is but one true Church upon Earth, there being but one God, one Chriſt, one Baptiſm, and one Faith; But, concerning one Point, many Errors and Abuſes may be committed. Neither have the Popiſh Party any reaſon to brag of a particular Holineſs, eſpecially concerning theſe matters, wherein they differ from the Proteſtants. The word *Catholick*,

Mat. 18. 20.

relates here to a Doctrine, not to a Sovereign State, whose Authority is to be Universal over Christendom, so that that Church is to be esteemed a Catholick Church, which contains every particular Point of Doctrine in the true sense, as they are proposed in the Holy Scripture; And those are called Hereticks, who only profess some particular Points out of the Holy Writ, (for such as absolutely reject it, are counted Infidels and Reprobates) but either deny or explain the rest in a wrong and perverted sense. How can the Popish Clergy therefore assume the Title of the Catholick Church, before they have, and that without contradiction, proved every Point of their Faith out of the Holy Scripture? Or, exclude us Protestants from that Title, till they have proved that our Doctrine is contrary to it? Lastly, It is called the Apostolical Church, as being founded upon the Doctrine of the Apostles. And the true Church loses nothing of its intrinsick Value, whether it has been planted by the Apostles, or whether the Apostolical Doctrine has been transmitted to them by others.

Whether Subjects, without the Consent of their Sovereigns, may separate themselves from an Erroneous Religion?

§. 54. But it is not a very difficult Task to introduce a Reformation in Religion with the mutual Consent of Sovereign and Subjects; so it may be questioned, whether Subjects may attempt a Reformation, when their Sovereigns, and the whole Clergy, or at least the greatest part of them, do not acknowledge their Error, but rather pretend to maintain it? In this case, it is our Opinion that, provided these Errors do touch the Fundamental

Points

Points of our Faith, ſuch Subjects, as by the Grace of God, and the Light of his holy Spirit have attained the true Knowledge, may ſeparate themſelves from the Communion of that Church, without the conſent of their Sovereigns or the Clergy. For, every body being accountable to God for his Religion, and anſwerable for his own Soul, whoſe Salvation cannot abſolutely be committed to any Body elſe; and, a Chriſtian, in Matters of Faith, being not altogether to rely upon his Sovereign or the Clergy, (at leaſt no farther than their Doctrine is congruous with the holy Scripture.) It is undeniable, that Subjects may ſeparate themſelves from the Communion of that Church, which is profeſſed by their Sovereign and Clergy, provided they can make it evidently appear, that ſuch a Church is infected with groſs Abuſes, and dangerous Errors. For, the Church is a Colledge, whoſe Members are not kept in Union by any Temporal Power, but by the Union of the Faith; and, whoſoever relinquiſhes that, he diſſolves the ſacred Tye of the Believers. Beſides that, it is not abſolutely neceſſary for our Salvation, that the Church be compoſed of a great Number, but the ſame may be obtained, either by a greater or leſſer Number of the Believers. Neither can this Separation prove in the leaſt prejudicial to the Sovereign Authority, it being ſuppoſed, that thoſe who have ſeparated themſelves adhere to the true pure Doctrine of the Goſpel, free from all Poiſon, and Principles dangerous or prejudicial to the Government. For, civil Society was not inſtitu-

ted for Religion's ſake; neither does the Church of Chriſt participate of the nature of a Temporal State; and therefore a Prince that embraces the Chriſtian Faith, does not thereby acquire an abſolute Sovereignty over the Church or Mens Conſciences. So, that, if, notwithſtanding this Separation, the Subjects pay due Allegiance to their Prince in Temporal Affairs, there is no reaſon ſufficient which can oblige him to trouble them meerly upon the ſcore of their Conſciences. For, what loſs is it to the Prince, whether his Subjects are of the ſame Religion with himſelf, or of unother? Or, (which was ſuppoſed before) whether they did maintain the ſame Errors, as he does? The caſe indeed, would be quite different, if they ſhould endeavour to withdaw themſelves from their Allegiance, to ſet up a ſeparate Society without his Conſent; tho' it is undeniable, that there are ſome Caſes of Neceſſity, when this civil Tye or Allegiance may be diſſolved, as for Inſtance; when Subjects, for want of ſufficient Protection from their natural Prince, are ſo hardly preſſed upon by a more Potent Enemy, that they are forc'd to ſubmit to his Power. And granted the Power of Sovereigns in the Church to be much greater, than in effect it is, Subjects are nevertheleſs bound to take care of their Souls, whoſe Salvation is to be preferr'd before all other things, in regard of which they may ſeparate themſelves from an Eſtabliſhed Religion, provided they are convinced of its Errors. For, that Subject who ſacrifices his Life for his Prince, does doubtleſs a glorious Action; but what Prince

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can be ſo unreaſonable, as to expect that his Subjects ſhould Sacrifice their Souls to the Devil for his ſake. That Prince therefore who does trouble his faithful Subjects for no other reaſon, but becauſe they cannot conform to his Opinion (eſpecially if they can maintain theirs out of the Holy Scripture) commits an Act of Injuſtice; Nay, I cannot ſee how he can with Juſtice force them out of his Territories. It is true, he may refuſe to receive Hereticks into his Dominions, unleſs it be for Reaſons of State; Neither can a true Believer take it amiſs, if he is not permitted to ſettle in a Commonwealth govern'd by Hereticks. For, the Right of Naturalization belongs to Sovereigns, which they may refuſe and give to whom they think it convenient. But, as it is certainly the greateſt Injuſtice in the World, to force an in-born Natural Subject, who has ſettled all his Fortunes in a Commonwealth, meerly for his Religion's ſake, without being convicted of his Error, out of his Native Country, to the great detriment and danger of himſelf and his Family. So, if a Subject inclines voluntarily to leave his Native Country, either to avoid the Frowns of his Prince, or the hatred of the Clergy and Common People, and to ſerve God with more freedom according to his own Conſcience, it ought not to be refuſed by his Sovereign. I remember there is a certain Proverb uſed among the *Germans*, viz. *He that Commands the Country, Commands Religion.* But this cannot be applied to the Princes of the *Roman Catholick* Religion, who cannot lay any Claim to it, it being evident

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that the Popiſh Clergy do not allow any ſuch thing to theſe Princes; And, as to what concerns the Proteſtant Eſtates of *Germany*, it cannot be denied, but that they made uſe of this Pretenſion againſt the Emperor at the time of the Reformation, which however ought to be thus interpreted; That they denied the Emperor to have any Power of intermedling in the Affairs relating to their own Dominions, not, that only they claim'd it as belonging to the Rights of Sovereignty to impoſe any Religion, tho' never ſo falſe, upon their Subjects; notwithſtanding all which, there are not wanting Examples, that Princes have acted conformable to this Proverb with their Subjects. A Prince, who troubles his faithful Subjects meerly upon the ſcore of Religion, commits a groſs Error; no Chriſtian Prince being obliged to propagate his Religion by forcible means; provided his Subjects ſtand firm to their Allegiance to him, he being not anſwerable in particular for their Religion. It cannot be taken notice of without aſtoniſhment, how both in former times and our Age, ſome Princes, who were naturally not enclined to Cruelty, having in other reſpects given great Proofs of their Clemency, yet have been prevailed upon to raiſe the moſt horrid Perſecutions againſt their Subjects, barely upon the ſcore of Religion. But it has been foretold in Holy Scripture, that this Fate ſhould attend the Chriſtian Church, when it is ſaid,

Rev. 18. 3. That *Mighty Kings upon Earth ſhould commit Whoredom with the Whore of Babylon.* And, who is ignorant that Gallants will often commit

mit the moſt barbarous Acts, meerly to pleaſe their Harlots? All true Chriſtians therefore ought couragiouſly to oppoſe the Threats and Attempts of this Beaſt, committing the reſt to Divine Providence. And, as for ſuch Princes and States, as have ſhaken off the Yoke of Popiſh Slavery, if they ſeriouſly reflect, how their fellow-Proteſtants are perſecuted, and in what barbarous manner they are treated, will, queſtionleſs without my Advice, take ſuch meaſures, as may be moſt convenient for to ſecure themſelves from ſo imminent a Danger.

The

The following

ANIMADVERSIONS

Made by the Author, upon ſome Paſſages of a Book, Entituled,

A POLITICAL EPITOMY,

Concerning the Power of Sovereigns in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs.

WRITTEN BY

ADRIAN HOUTUYN,

Having a very near Relation to the former TREATISE, it was thought fit to Inſert them here by way of

APPENDIX.

IT is a Queſtion of the greateſt moment, which, if rightly determined, tends to the Benefit of Mankind in general, *viz.* Unto whom, and under what Limitations thePower inEccleſiaſtical Affairs is to be aſcribed in the State? If the old Proverb, *That thoſe who chuſe the middle way are commonly the moſt ſucceſsful*, has not loſt its force, it may without queſtion, be moſt properly applied in this Caſe, where both Extreams are equally dangerous, ſince thereby the Conſciences of Subjects are left to the arbitrary diſpoſal, either of the Pope of *Rome*, or their Sovereigns.

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There having not been wanting, both in the laſt and our Age, Men eminent for their Learning, who have with very ſolid Arguments oppoſed the Tyranny of the firſt, it is but reaſonable for us, to take heed, that ſince we have eſcaped the danger of *Scylla*, we may not be ſwallowed up by *Charybdis*. For, as ſcarce any body that is in his right Senſes can go about to deny, that the SovereignPower ows its original either to God, or the general Conſent of the People; So it is a matter mutually advantageous both to the Prince and Subjects, to underſtand, how far this Power is limited in the State, that the firſt may not tranſgreſs their due Bounds, and, inſtead of being Fathers of their Subjects, prove their moſt dangerous Enemies. *Adrian Houtuyn* a Civilian in *Holland*, having in a Treatiſe, called, *A Political Epitomy*, inſerted ſeveral Aſſertions tending to the latter of theſe two Extremes, and it having been obſerved of late, that this Book has been recommended by ſome *Doctors* in the Law, to the great detriment of young Students; I thought it not amiſs to make ſome Animadverſions upon his LXIII, and following SECTIONS, which may ſerve as a Guide to the younger Sort, leſt they, under the Cloak of aſſerting the Prerogatives of Sovereigns, may be miſlead into the latter of theſe Extremes, and attribute that to the Prince, which God has reſerved as his own Prerogative, and thus, irrecoverably, play the Prodigal with their own Liberty and Property.

This Author ſpeaking concerning the Prerogative of Princes, *Sect.* LXIII, runs on thus:

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He has an uncontroul'd Power over all External, Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, which are not determined in the Holy Scripture. He aliedges for a Reaſon, becauſe that Power is granted to Sovereigns at the ſame time when Subjects ſubmitted, themſelves and their Fortunes to their Diſpoſal. But it ought to be taken into Conſideration, that certain Matters belonging to the external Exerciſe of Religious Worſhip have ſo ſtrict an Union with the internal Part, that, if the firſt be not diſpoſed in a manner agreeable to this inſeparable Tye, the latter muſt of neceſſity undergo ſuch Alterations, as are inconſiſtent with its Nature. And, ſince Mr. *Houtuyn* do's not leave the internal Part to the Diſpoſal of Sovereigns, how can the exterior Worſhip be ſubmitted to their meer Pleaſure, conſidering this ſtrict Union betwixt them? Beſides this *General Submiſſion*, he ſpeaks of admits of Limitation, in regard of that End, for which Civil Societies were Inſtituted, which is, the mutual defence againſt Violences: From whence it is evident, that there are certain Matters, belonging to every private Perſon, derived from the State of natural Freedom, which were not abſolutely left to the Diſpoſal of Sovereigns, at leaſt, no further than they were neceſſary to obtain that End. Religion having not any relation to this End, it is not to be imagined, that Subjects did ſubmit their Religion to the arbitrary Pleaſure of Sovereigns. And, it being unqueſtionable, that Subjects may exerciſe certain Acts belonging to them by Vertue of an inherent Right, derived from the free State of Nature, and independent from

their

their Sovereigns, it may rationally be concluded, that, when Subjects did submit themselves, in Matters of Religion, to their Sovereigns, it was done with this Supposition, that both the Prince and Subjects were of one and the same Religion; and that the external Exercise of Religious Worship was not left to the Disposal of the first, any further, than in such Matters as are indifferent in regard of the internal Part of it. What is alledged concerning the the *maintaining a good Order, and avoiding of Confusion*, it is to be observed, that this is not the main End, for which Civil Societies were Instituted, nor has it any relation to it, but only thus far, as it may be instrumental to maintain the Publick Tranquility.

As to *N.* 2. It is to be observed, that, because Priests have a dependance from the Civil Power in certain Respects belonging to its Jurisdiction, this does not involve Religion (considered as such) under the same Subjection. The following words ought also to be taken notice of: *A Christian Prince commands over the Church, as being a Colledge, and representing one single Person in the Commonwealth. The Church, thus considered, is a Civil Society or Body Politick, founded upon the Publick Authority and Power, and ought to be regarded, as being in the same condition with other Colledges and Bodies Politick; and in this Sense a King is the Head of the Church in his Dominions.* Whoever will consider the real difference betwixt the Church and Commonwealth, must needs find as many Errors, as there are words here. For, because a Prince has the Sovereign Jurisdiction in a Com-

Commonweath, consisting of Christian Subjects; no inference is to be made, that therefore he may, in the same degree, exercise his Sovereignty in the Church, as in the Commonwealth, and that in the same Sense, he may be called, *The Supream Head of the Church, as of the Commonwealth.* 'Tis true, the Church is a Society, but not a Body Politick, founded upon the Publick Authority, but owes it Original to a higher Principle, having not, like other Colledges, its dependency from the State. What is alledged out of *Titus*, 2. 9. *Colos.* 3. 20, 22. *Rom.* 13. 3, 4. 1 *Pet.* 2. 14. is strangely misrepresented to evince, that Ecclesiastical Matters are dependent from the absolute Pleasure of Sovereigns. What Follows might also very well deserve some Animadversions, if it were not beyond our scope at present.

N. 13. It is a gross Error, That, *as a Consequence of this Sovereign Power in Ecclesiastical Affairs*, he attributes to them, *the Titles of Pastors, Ministers, Heralds of God, Bishops, Priests, and Apostles.* Pray, with what Authority, and with what sense? For, the Duty belonging to Sovereigns, which entitles them to the name of *being the Guardians of both Tables of the Decalogue, and of being the Foster-Fathers and Defenders of the Church*, is of a far different Nature from what he would insinuate here. And, if it be not to be left to the absolute Judgment of the Clergy it self, with exclusion of the rest of the Members of the Church, to determine in Ecclesiastical Affairs, what is agreeable to the Word of God, how can this Judgment belong to the Sove-

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reign alone, without allowing a ſhare to the reſt of the Members of the Church?

Theſe words in the §. LXIV. *Each Sovereign may eſtabliſh what Religion he pleaſes in his Dominions*, ought not to be let paſs by without a ſevere Correction. The Reaſon alledged is very frivolous: *Becauſe all Publick and external Actions depend from the Publick Authority.* Is this your Aſſertion, good Mr. *Houtuyn*, that Princes may impoſe what Religion they pleaſe upon their Subjects, and by their abſolute Authority make it the eſtabliſh'd Religion, with excluſion to all others, who, if not complying, muſt, forſooth, fly the Country? What Religion they pleaſe, do you ſay! the the Pagan, Falſe, Fictious, or Superſtitious, it matters not which. From whence, pray, was this Power derived to Sovereigns? Not certainly from God, except you can ſhew us a Divine Authority for it. Not from the common conſent of thoſe that entred into Civil Societies; Commonwealths not being inſtituted for Religion's ſake, and of a later date; beſides, that ſuch a Power is not requiſite for the attaining that end, for which Civil Societies were eſtabliſh'd. Neither is it left to the bare pleaſure of any Perſon, tho' conſidered as in the Natural ſtate of Freedom, to profeſs what Religion he pleaſes: But, ſuppoſing it was, no Inference can be made from thence, that the ſame may be forc'd upon others. The diſtinction he makes betwixt the *internal and external Religion*, muſt alſo be taken with a great deal of Circumſpection, leſt ſome People might perſwade themſelves, that it is in-

different what Religion a Man profeſſes in outward ſhew, provided he be ſatisfied as to the internal part of it. Furthermore, it is abſolutely falſe, that all Publick Actions, that is, every thing done in Publick in the Commonwealth, owes its Original to the Sovereign Power; there being ſeveral things to be done by Subjects in publick, depending meerly from that Liberty belonging to them in the Natural ſtate of Liberty, or from God's Command, or from a certain Power granted to them by God Almighty.

It is no leſs falſe, That all exterior Actions depend from the Civil Authority; For, according to Mr. *Houtuyn*'s Opinion, the Doctrine of Divinity, and the Confeſſion of Faith, as comprehended in a certain form, are to be reckoned among thoſe exterior Actions. Mr. *Houtuyn* is much in the wrong, when he pretends to draw an Inference from thence; that, becauſe it belongs to Sovereigns to take care, that their Subjects may be well inſtructed concerning what Opinion they ought to have of God, as the Eſtabliſher of Juſtice; they therefore have a Right of diſpoſing (in an Arbitrary way) of revealed Religion, and to declare any Religion whatſoever, which pretends to Revelation, the Eſtabliſh'd Religion in the Commonwealth. It is a much groſſer Miſtake yet, when he aſſerts: That *any Religion eſtabliſh'd in a State, tho' never ſo falſe, contributes to the Publick Tranquility of that Commonwealth.* It is poſſible that a Religion defective in ſome Points, may nevertheleſs lead People into the way of Salvation; but thoſe that contain falſe

Doctrines

Doctrines of God and his Attributes, are incapable of producing that Effect. The Publick Tranquility, founded upon such false Opinions, will be very unstable, and may with more ease, or at least with the same conveniency be obtained by the true Doctrine; especially if it be taken into consideration, that, tho' it be possible that such Impostures may beguile the giddy-headed Multitude, they cannot always pass for currant among Men of a sound Understanding: It is to be remembred, that the Southsayers at *Rome* cannot forbear laughing, when they meet another of the same Profession. We must beg Mr. *Houtuyn*'s Pardon, if we question his Authority, when he pretends to perswade us: That *Faith*, which he is pleased to call *every ones private Religion, independent from any Temporal Power*, will not be impaired by a Man's professing any other Religion, established by the Sovereign Authority; and he leaves it to the discretion of those Civil Governours, which of all Religions they will be pleased to establish in their Dominions, whether that of the *Japoneses*, of the *Brachmans*, *Mahometans*, *Jews*, or *Christians*; and among all those that pretend to the Christian Name, such a one as may be most agreeable to their own Fancy. I much question, whether he will meet with many Tools, that will take his Word for it. A great part of Christendom did look upon it as a thing insufferable, that the Pope of *Rome* should set up for the great Arbitrator of Christendom in matters relating to the Christian Faith, tho' his Pretences did not reach further than to force

one Religion upon the World, which he knew was moſt likely to turn to his own Advantage: But now it ſeems it has pleaſed God, that Sovereigns ſhould be inveſted with a Power of eſtabliſhing any Religion at pleaſure; and it being beyond queſtion, that there are ſeveral Religions which have not the leaſt relation to one another, they may, with the ſame Right, at ſeveral times, declare, ſeveral diſtinct Religions, nay, even thoſe that are quite oppoſite to one another, the eſtabliſh'd Religion, and nevertheleſs every one of theſe muſt be accepted, forſooth, as the true Religion. The next Conſequence will be, that Sovereigns, having a Right of defending and altering the eſtabliſh'd Religion, and to puniſh ſuch as treſpaſs againſt it, one Prince will have no more Right to cheriſh and maintain one Religion, but his Succeſſors may, with the ſame Right, aboliſh it, and puniſh ſuch of his Subjects as adhere to it. So that according to the Doctrine of Mr. *Houtuyn*'s Goſpel, the eſtabliſh'd Religion will be ſettled upon the ſame Foundation with ſome Statutes, which may be enacted and repeal'd by Sovereigns at pleaſure.

In §. LXV. He entirely, and without limitation, aſcribes to the Prince the Power of *Conſtituting Miniſters of the Goſpel, in the ſame manner as if they were Miniſters of the State.* But in the Commonwealth of the *Jews*, regulated according to God's own Inſtitution, no ſuch Power was granted to their Kings; Neither had the Apoſtles themſelves, (tho' the moſt general Teachers that ever were (as being

being ſent to Preach the Goſpel to all the World) their Authority of Teaching from any Temporal Sovereigns. Neither can it be proved, that the Church, at the time, when Sovereigns firſt embraced the Chriſtian Faith, did transferr this Power of conſtituting Miniſters of the Goſpel, without limitation, to thoſe Princes; tho' at the ſame time it is not to be denied, but that Sovereigns have a conſiderable ſhare in it. His Argument taken from *the care Parents ought to have of the Salvation of their Children*, does not reach to what he pretends to prove; for, ſays he, Princes being the Publick Fathers of the Commonwealth; *it belongs to their Princely Office, to provide for the Eternal Salvation of their Subjects.* For, beſides that, the Title of *Father of the Commonwealth* is a Metaphorical Expreſſion, the Fatherly and the Regal Office depend from a quite different Principle, and the care to be taken of Children of a tender Age, is of another Nature with that which ought to be employed for the Safety of a whole People; neither were Sovereigns inveſted with the Supream Authority to enable them to procure Eternal Salvation to their Subjects, God having preſcribed other ways and means for the obtaining of it. It cannotbe denied, but that a Prince muſt not be regardleſs of this Care, nevertheleſs ought the ſame not to reach beyond its due Bounds, but muſt be effected by ſuch Methods as are approved of in the Holy Scripture, and ſuit with the true Genius of the Chriſtian Religion; Wherefore, it is in vain to attribute to Sovereigns a Power of

obtruding any Religion, at pleasure, upon their Subjects; it being beyond question, that not all Religions are conducing to obtain Eternal Salvation. So *Abraham*, the Father of Believers, did not impose upon his Children what Religion he thought most convenient, but he charged them to walk in the ways of the Lord, such as were manifested to them in the Holy Scripture. What St. *Paul* says, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. is very well worth taking notice of, *viz.* That the chief care of the Supream Governours shall be, so to Rule over their Subjects, that they may live under them, not only honestly, but piously; this being the way to Eternal Salvation. It is to be observed, that those Princes, for whom the Apostle enjoined the Christians to pray, being Pagans, made but little account of Piety, especially of that belonging to the Christians; but it was thought sufficient for the Christians to enjoy the common Benefit of the Publick Tranquility under their Protection, the rest being left to their own care. So we read that the Poet's enjoyment of his Muses, was owing to *Augustus Cæsar*'s Protection; nevertheless the Emperor did not concern himself about the Rules of Poetry. Furthermore, it is a very gross way of Arguing, when he Asserts: That, *the Commonwealth and Church are both one and the same thing under a Christian Prince, whose Subjects also profess the Christian Religion, the only difference being in respect of their different Qualifications: They being in the Commonwealth to be considered as they are Subjects, in the Church as Believers.* It seems, Mr. *Houtuyn* looks upon that Difference to be

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of little moment, which arises from divers Moral Qualifications, and includes different Obligations, and is founded upon another Legal Principle. It is confess'd, that in such a case where the Head is not differing in his Natural Constitution from the Rights and Power belonging to him, the rest of the Members, tho' differently considered under divers Qualifications, are nevertheless to be look'd upon as one and the same Society. As for instance: If a Prince puts himself at the Head of all his Subjects upon an Expedition, these, tho' they may be considered either as Soldiers or Subjects, yet do not differ in any Essential Part; As for Example: The People of *Israel*, when going upon their Expedition under the Conduct of *Joshua*, was the very same that afterwards, under his Protection, enjoyed and inhabited the Country of *Canaan*. But the Church and Commonwealth, tho' composed out of the self-same Persons, do not only differ in their very Foundation, but also a Sovereign cannot claim the same Right and Name of being the Supream Head of the Church in the same sense, as he is the Supream Governour of the State. For, in the latter he exercises his Authority without controul, being subject to no body; But, the Head of the Church is Christ, who Rules it by his Word, announced to us by the Teachers of the Church; so, that a Sovereign cannot as much as claim the Right of being Christ's Vicegerent in the Church; And, on the other hand, tho' it is said of Christ, *That all Power is given unto him in Heaven, and upon Earth*, nevertheless it

cannot be ſaid of him, to be, in the ſame manner, the Head of Civil Societies, as of the Church. The next following Aſſertion runs thus: *Where the whole Commonwealth is not compoſed out of Chriſtians, the Church is a Congregation of the Believers in the Commonwealth.* But, where all Subjects are Chriſtians, the Church is nevertheleſs nothing elſe than a Colledge in the Commonwealth. But what he alledges of the Church being ſometimes taken in the ſame ſenſe with the Commonwealth, is abſolutely falſe. For the words, Κατ' ἐκκλησίαν in *Acts* 14. 23. and thoſe in *Titus* 1. 5. Κατὰ πόλιν are no Synoms; but the latter is to be underſtood thus: In all the Towns and Cities, where there was any Chriſtian Church. The Inference he would make from the Military Function, and the Adminiſtration of Juſtice, being both included in one Government, is to no purpoſe; both of them owing their Off-ſpring to that End for which Civil Societies were inſtituted, which is not the ſame in the Church; and Sovereigns are entruſted with the Sword of War and Juſtice, not with the Miniſterial Function of Preaching the Goſpel. From whence it comes, that Generals and Judges are ſubordinate to the Princely Office, but not the Miniſters of the Goſpel, they being (barely conſidered as ſuch) not properly Miniſters of the Prince and State, but Miniſters of Chriſt and the Church. He ſays further; *That the aſſignation of the Miniſterial Function does not appertain to the Internal part of Religion.* But if Faith comes from hearing, and no body can believe, without being

being inſtructed; it is undeniable, that thoſe that Preach the Goſpel, have a ſhare in the internal part of Religion, they being to be conſidered as the Inſtruments, by the help of whom, the Goſpel, and conſequently the Faith, is conveyed to their Auditors. It is falſe, when he aſſerts, That Sovereigns, tho' no Chriſtians, have a Right of conſtituting Miniſters; *For*, ſays he, *their Right is the ſame.* But a Prince, who makes not Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, tho' he has Chriſtian Subjects under his Juriſdiction, and allows them the free Exerciſe of their Religion, has nevertheleſs not the leaſt Power over their Church, as being no Member of it. It is no leſs falſe, what he ſays, that ſince Princes are become Chriſtians, the Vocation of Miniſters does no more depend from the Church; *Juſt as a Man, by ſubmitting himſelf under another Juriſdiction, is no more at his own diſpoſal.* For, a Prince by becoming a Member of the Church, does thereby not make himſelf Maſter of that Church, but rather ſubmits to the Obedience of Chriſt, the Head of the Church; and therefore does not incroach all its Rights to himſelf, but only can claim his ſhare as ſuch, unleſs a certain Church ſhould voluntarily ſurrender its Rights, as far as it lies in its power, to the Sovereign. And I ſee no reaſon, why the Church may not be under the Protection of a Chriſtian Sovereign, *as repreſenting a certain Perſon in the Commonwealth, and therefore to Act and Decree by plurality of Votes, which implies a Right, at leaſt by Conſent.* For, there is a *Medium* betwixt the State or Commonwealth

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and a diſorderly Multitude, *viz.* a Colledge, where there is no occaſion for a coerſive Sovereign Power. This may be illuſtrated by an Example: For, ſuppoſing in a Commonwealth a certain Society or Company of Merchants, regulated by certain Statutes of their own, under the Direction of ſome of its own Members. Into this Colledge a Prince has a mind to be received as a Member, paying his certain ſhare. By being thus made a Member of this Company, he has not obtained an abſolute diſpoſal over this Society; but rather has accommodated himſelf to the Statutes of the Colledge, neither can he claim any other Prerogative there, but what is derived either from his ſhare in that Company, or from a free Gift, and voluntary conſent of the reſt of its Members; and as a Member of this Colledge he is to be conſidered, not as a Prince, but as a Merchant. There is nevertheleſs one remarkable difference, *viz.* That it is in the Power of a Sovereign to hinder the ſetting up of ſuch a Society, which is not the ſame in regard of the Church. He plainly betrays his Ignorance, when he ſays: *That the Church is to be conſidered as a multitude of People, comprehended in the Perſon of one Prince; from whence the Prince repreſents the People, like one Publick Perſon, through whom the whole People declare their Sentiments.* For, tho' this be appliable to the Commonwealth, it is not to the Church, they being quite different from one another. It cannot be denied, but that thoſe who have the Sovereign Power in the State, may Enact what Laws they think moſt convenient; But

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to attribute the ſame Power to Sovereigns over the Church, is a Madneſs, and ſavours of Blaſphemy. And, ſuppoſing a Prince ſhould be miſled into Errors, or Hereſie, muſt therefore the whole Church be accounted Erroneous, or Heretical? Except he would perſwade us alſo, that Princes are Infallible. Wherefore in thoſe places where the Election of Miniſters is independent from the Prince, it is ſuppoſed to proceed from a Right tranſferred unto him by the Church; The ſame is to be underſtood, where this Election is managed either by the Biſhops or Presbyters. But in caſe the ſame be done by the whole Church, it would be prepoſterous to ſay, that ſuch an Election was made by vertue of a Priviledge granted by the Prince. Mr. *Houtuyn* having granted before, *That the Paſtoral Function, not being annexed to any certain Perſon, (conſidered as ſuch) had no dependency from the Civil Juriſdiction, but owed its Inſtitution to Chriſt.* Nevertheleſs in §. LXVI. he affirms: *That the actual Adminiſtration of the Miniſterial Function is an External Publick Act, ſuch as is ſubject to the Civil Power.* Which is the ſame in effect, as if he ſaid, Matrimony is a Divine Inſtitution, but it depends from the Prince, whether he will allow his Subjects to Marry actually or not. For, ſuppoſing a Sovereign ſhould take a Reſolution to forbid the antient Exerciſe of the Miniſterial Function, what would, in ſuch a Caſe, become of this Paſtoral or Miniſterial Function? It is alſo inſufferable what he ſays immediately after: *An Election is a voluntary Act, therefore revocable at pleaſure*; it being certain,

tain, that it cannot be done without impairing the Reputation of the Minister.

What relates to §. LXVII. It is denied, that *Nebuchadonosor had any legal Authority* to put to Death such as refused to adore the great Statue, set up by his Order. For, a Prince who inflicts any Punishment upon his Subjects, against the express Command of the holy Scripture, does not, at that time exercise his legal Authority, but commits an hostile and tyrannical Act. So, when King *Ahab*, under pretence of a legal Process, and by subborning of false Witnesses, possess'd himself of *Naboth*'s Vineyard, did no more exercise his legal Jurisdiction, than a Guardian may be said to do, when he commits a Rape upon a Pupil committed to his Management. But, when the same *Nebuchadonosor* publishes his Edict, *That no body dare to blaspheme the God of the Jews*, he did, without all question, nothing but what belong'd to his high Station. He runs on further; *viz.* That *Peter*, *John*, *Stephen*, *Paul*, nay, even our Saviour himself, did appear before the *Sanhedrim*, before *Fœlix*, *Festus*, *Cæsar* and *Pilate*, without taking the least Exception against the legality of their Jurisdiction. What could be more falsely invented? Did *Peter* and *John* acknowledge the Jurisdiction of the *Sanhedrim* in respect of the Christian Doctrine, when they told them to their very Faces, that they would not obey their Command, of not preaching in the Name of Jesus? Did *Stephen* acknowledge the Jurisdiction of the *Sanhedrim*, when he told them, You uncircumcised in your Hearts and Ears,

Act. 4. 19, 20.

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you always resist the holy Ghost? Neither is it an Argument, that *Paul*, and an infinite Number of Martyrs did acknowledge the Jurisdiction of those Princes, and other Civil Magistrates, when they, being forced to appear before them, endeavoured to prove their Innocence, there being no other Tribunal to which they could appeal; and it being at that time look'd upon as a Crime deserving Death, for any one to profess himself a Christian. All the defence they made may be reduced under two Heads: For they either denied those Crimes laid to their Charge, as calumnious, or else they asserted even to the last, That the profession of the Christian Religion did not depend from the Civil Jurisdiction. And those Magistrates that absolved the Confessors of this Truth, did in effect give this Sentence: *That this was a Cause not belonging to their Jurisdiction.* It is a wonder to me how Mr. *Houtuyn*, who pretends to be a Lawyer, can find out any thing in the least resembling a legal Process in that Action of *Pilate*, it being to be considered no otherwise than a publick Robbery, and *a power of darkness*, since in all his Proceedings, there is not a footstep of a legal Process to be met with. And it is so manifest, that, when religious Matters were in question, the due Method and judicial Order of a legal Process have been violated a thousand times over and over, that it would be superfluous to alledge any Examples of it here. When Sovereigns punish or chastise a Pastor or Minister of the Church, who has abused his Function, or been defective in it, this power does properly

Luk. 22. 53.

not

not proceed from the Civil Jurisdiction, but from a Right translated to the Sovereign by the Church. But those that are punished by the Civil Authority, because *they have stirr'd up, by their turbulent Speeches and Sermons, the People to Rebellion against their Sovereigns, or have attempted to withdraw the Auditors from, and to resist the Power of a legal Jurisdiction,* cannot be said to undergo Punishment on the account of the Christian Religion. Furthermore, it is false, that the Church (considered as such) can claim any Jurisdiction, properly speaking. It is no less false, that the Power of disposing and exercising those Functions, belonging to each Church, is a civil Act, in regard of its publick Effect. Mr. *Houtuyn* has been drawn into all these Errors, by confounding the Commonwealth with the Church. If these two be not very nicely distinguished, but we allow the Church to be entirely swallowed up in the civil Power, what have we got by shaking of the Popish Yoak? For, the condition of the Church will be never the better, if all Ecclesiastical Matters, without Exception are left to the arbitrary Disposal of Sovereigns; To maintain which, Mr. *Houtuyn*, in contradiction to all Reason and the Scripture it self, has invented; *A spiritual Good, or the eternal Welfare of People, as the main End and Duty of the Sovereign Power*; By Vertue of which, he enables his Prince to force his Subjects to profess publickly what Religion he will be pleased to impose upon them, tho' never so contrary to their own Opinion. For it may be sufferable for a Man to keep his own Opinion concealed to himself, but to be oblig'd

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to profeſs what is quite contrary to it, is both abominable and intolerable. The Saying of *Conſtantine the Great*, ſo much extoll'd by Mr. *Houtuyn* himſelf, is contradictory to his Aſſertion, *viz. That he could have wiſh'd, all his Subjects to have been Chriſtians, but that he never forced any.* For, this Emperour not only never attempted to force any one from his own Opinion (which indeed was beyond his Power) but alſo never conſtrained his Subjects to profeſs themſelves Chriſtians againſt their own Inclinations. Our Author does alſo not a little contradict himſelf, in what he ſays concerning Words, ſometimes exempting them from any civil Cogniſance; whereas, before he had made them liable to the civil Juriſdiction: *What*, ſays he; *if our Faith expreſs'd by Words ſhould come to the knowledge of our Sovereign? It ought to be look'd upon not ſo much as a Crime, but rather as an Error, to correct which, is not to be effected by Puniſhments (which do illuminate our Mind) but rather by good Inſtructions.* But thoſe that know the real difference betwixt the Commonwealth and Church, that is to ſay, betwixt the State and a Colledge, may without much difficulty diſſolve theſe knotty Queſtions, which he has ſtarted concerining the Juriſdiction and Legiſlative Power of Princes over the Church.

As to the §. LXIX. It is to be obſerved, that it is put beyond all queſtion, that Sovereigns have a Right to give the Authority and Force of a Law to ſuch Statutes as they find ſuitable to the State, it being their Prerogative to determine, according to what Laws Judgment is to be given in Civil Courts of Judicature, what

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is punishable, and what is to be left to the Conscience of every Subject. But it implies an Absurdity, to attribute to Sovereigns a Right of giving publick Authority to Prophesies themselves, neither the Intrinsick nor Historical Faith having any dependence on the Civil Jurisdiction, by the force of which Subjects may be obliged to act, but not to believe. From whence it is evident, that if any Prophecy appear to be from God, it cannot receive any Addition by the Authority of the Prince, no more than if he should declare *Cicero* to be a good *Latin* Author. But in case a pretended Prophecy be either ambiguous or supposititious in it self, and a Prince should persuade himself to be able by his own Authority to make it pass current for Truth, he would be look'd upon as one beyond his Senses; What he insinuates concerning the New Testament in general, is much of the same Stamp: *It was not*, says he, *in the power of Christ and his Apostles, to establish this Doctrine* (of the New Testament) *by Publick Authority, which was the reason it remain'd in a private condition, till such time when Princes having received the Christian Faith, they gave it a publick Authority, and the force of Laws.* But the Rules and Doctrine of Christ cannot receive any additional Strength from the Civil Power, it being contrary to its Genius to be established and promoted by civil Punishments; For, whosoever out of fear of Temporal Punishments, professes in outward shew only this Doctrine, does not act according to, nor fulfil the Will of Christ.

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The ſame may be repliy'd to §. LXX. For, as the Scripture and the Chriſtian Doctrine do not owe their Authority to the civil Juriſdiction, the latter being introduced in the Government by God's peculiar Aſſiſtance, inſpite of all the Reſiſtance of the civil Powers; So ought the Interpretation of the the ambiguous and controverted Paſſages in the holy Scripture, not to be determined by the Sovereign Authority; it belonging not to the Prince only, but to the whole Church, or ſuch as are authoriſed by the Church; tho' at the ſame time, the Prince, conſidered as the Chief Member of it, cannot be excluded from having his ſhare in ſuch a Debate. It is a prophane Expreſſion when he ſays: *Chriſt himſelf having an unqueſtionable Power of introducing a new Law, muſt needs have a right to interpret the ſame. But, ſince during the time of his abode here, he lived among thoſe, that either out of Ignorance or Diſobedience did not own Chriſt, and that in a private Condition, ſubject to the civil Power; it is evident, that his Laws, Doctrine, and the Interpretation of them, did acquire their obliging Power, and publick Authority from the civil Conſtitution.* A little more would have made the Office of Chriſt, as being Mediator of the World, alſo dependent from the civil Juriſdiction. Is it not a prodigious Abſurdity to affirm; *That the Doctrine of Chriſt has received its publick Authority from the civil Power, among thoſe, who denied Chriſt? And what follows: That, if at the time of Chriſt, Princes had been Chriſtians, they would have acknowledged him for the true God, and the Son of God, ſubmitting themſelves to his Judgment; ſo,*

that the Interpretation of the Christian Doctrine would have been owing by Christ, to their Submission. Away with such Fictions not agreeable even to common Sense. He might as well say, that God's Power over us Mortals did owe its original to the submission of Princes; and in case they thought fit to withdraw themselves from this Obedience, God Almighty (I cannot relate it without horror) must thereby be reduced to the Condition of a private Person.

In the next Assertion, he is not altogether so much beyond his Senses, when he grants, even to Pagan Princes, a Right of determining the controverted Points among Christians, which is as much as to make a blind Man a competent Judge of the difference of Colours. When the Primitive Christians were forced to appear before the Pagan Judges, it was not on the Account of the Interpretation of the Scripture; The Christians could never be guilty of so gross an Error, as to Consult with the Unbelieving concerning the controverted Articles of Faith; But, being forced, against their will, to appear before them, they could not avoid to receive their Judgment, such as they were pleased to give, as having no way left them to decline it. Furthermore, our Author is pleased to affirm, That such an Interpretation ought to be look'd upon as establish'd by Publick Authority, which carries along with it an obliging force, at least in outward appearance; so, that Subjects are obliged to conform themselves to it by a verbal Confession, tho' never so discrepant,

pant, from that Opinion, they keep concealed within their hearts. But, the outward Behaviour, and verbal Confeſſions of a Chriſtian, which are not agreeable to the true Sentiments of his Heart, having not the leaſt affinity with Religion it ſelf, I don't ſee, upon what Account this Chimerical Power is attributed to Princes, unleſs it be, to furniſh them with a ſpecious pretext to afflict their Innocent Subjects. Thus much is certain, that Chriſt did not command his Doctrine to be propagated by forcible means; ſo, that, ſuppoſing the Articles, thus eſtabliſhed by the Civil Authority, to be never ſo conſonant to Truth, it is nevertheleſs inconſiſtent with the Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, to impoſe them upon Subjects by force, and under ſevere Penalties; But, ſuppoſing them to be falſe, the caſe of Subjects muſt needs be very miſerable, when they ſuffer Puniſhment, becauſe they will not profeſs an erroneous or falſe Doctrine. I ſee no other benefit to be reap'd from the egregious Aſſertions of our Author, than to ſerve for a Juſtification of the moſt Tyrannical Perſecutions that have been, and to declare them to have been done by Vertue of a Legal Authority. At this rate it will be no difficult Task to juſtifie the Proceedings againſt the Proteſtants in *France*, which move both Pity and Horror in all good Men, at leaſt, Mr. *Houtuyn* has very freely offered his Advice and Patronage. What follows next, is very ſmartly ſaid, to wit, *That the Coerſive Power may be Legal, whereas the Act of Obedience is not allowable.* No body of common ſenſe but will acknowledge,

knowledge, that this implies a most manifeſt Contradiction, and, that the Legal Sovereign Authority, and the Obligation of paying Obedience to it, are inſeparable from one another. Yet with this Nicety Mr. *Houtuyn* is ſo mightily taken, that he does not conſider, that at the ſame time, he grants an abſolute Authority to his Prince, to perſecute his Subjects on the Account of Religion, he takes away from them the Power of denying the true Religion. But, what Reaſon can be given, why the one ſhould have a coerſive Power, where the other cannot obey; unleſs it be done on purpoſe to encourage ambitious and imperious Princes, either to force their Subjects to a ſinful compliance, or never to want an Opportunity of afflicting the Innocent at Pleaſure? For thoſe that take to theſe violent ways of propagating the Faith, or rather (to ſpeak Truth) Hypocriſie and Superſtition, by their booted Apoſtles, are not contented to ſilence their Subjects, diſſenting from them in Point of Religion, who are alſo debarr'd even to ſave themſelves by flight; (tho' it be no ſmall Misfortune to a Subject, to be forced to leave his Native Country) but they compel them to profeſs publickly thoſe things for Truth, which they abhor in their Hearts, and appear to be Idolatrous, Superſtitious, or Fictitious; invented on purpoſe by thoſe that make their Market by Religion. Mr. *Houtuyn* himſelf cannot but confeſs, *That no body can ſafely acquieſce in any determination made concerning an Article of Faith, unleſs by his own private Judgment he find it agreeable to the Word*

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of God. And, if he find it not consonant to that, he ought not to rest satisfied in it, for fear he should disown his Faith, this being the worst, and most unbecoming thing belonging to a Christian. But, if it be unbecoming a Christian to deny his Faith, which is the same in effect, *as to rest satisfied in ones own private Opinion and Conscience, to keep secret within the heart what one believes, not to indulge ones Tongue, and to refrain from External Actions.* This being the Advice (which in contradiction to himself, he had not long before given to the Dissenting Subjects) what Reason can he give for his Assertion, when he attributes to his Prince a Power so unlimited, that his Christian Subjects must either be forced to undergo such an Indignity, or else the most horrible Persecutions that can be invented? The first Inventer of this unlimited Power, as far as ever I could learn, was Mr. *Thomas Hobbs*, the worst Interpreter that ever was in Divinity; whose Opinion, as to this kind, no body has taken so much pains to revive with the same Impudence, as Mr. *Adrian Houtuyn*. What I most admire at, is, that this should be attempted by one living in a State, whose Maxims are quite opposite to these Principles, and where consequently he could not reasonably propose to himself any Reward of his Adulation; There being not the least likelihood that the States General of the *United Provinces* should ever lay claim to such a Power; As it is not very probable that Princes will apply themselves to the Ministry of the Church, and undertake the Publick Exercise of the

Pastoral

Paſtoral Function in Perſon; ſo, that I cannot ſee, to what purpoſe our Author has been ſo careful in aſſerting it, in the behalf of Sovereigns; Unleſs he has pleaſed himſelf with this Fancy, that his Aſſertions cannot fail to make him to be the more admired among the Youngſters, by how much the more remote they are from common Senſe. Thus much at preſent for Mr. *Houtuyn*.

F I N I S.

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